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# THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

AND

## THE MAGI FROM THE EAST

### A SERMON

PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF THE BAPTISM OF A PARSII  
YOUTH, AUGUST 31, 1856,

WITH SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS.

BY JOHN WILSON, D.D., F.R.S.,

HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,  
AND MISSIONARY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THIS little volume is designed at once to elucidate and to assist an important movement towards Christianity on the part of a number of educated youths in Bombay, connected with the Pársí, Muhammadan, and Hindu portions of the community. To the native students at present, or lately, attending the Government, Missionary, or Private Educational Seminaries, it is specially inscribed.

The appearance of a number of candidates for admission into the Christian Church from the Government Educational Institutions is a novelty in Bombay, though not in some other parts of India. In the fact, however, there is nothing peculiarly wonderful. The impartial study of English literature, as such, has an enlightening and salutary tendency. Some of the missionaries of the locality have, for many years, by lectures, discussions, conferences, private classes, public preaching, and the dissemination of the Bible, and other Christian publications, expository both of Christian truth and Gentile error, done much to supplement and qualify this study. In this good work, they have been aided by Christian



converts of character and intelligence. Libraries, containing useful and instructive works, have been founded in many districts of the city; and to them serious and inquisitive youth have had easy access. The desires of many members of European society for the best interests of the natives have not been unnoticed and unimproved. Considerable inquiry and research have from time to time appeared in the native community.

Of the young men who have lately attracted public notice, it is frankly admitted that they had but little direct intercourse with missionaries,—though they were in frequent communication with those who had enjoyed such intercourse,—before they declared that their convictions were in favour of the religion of the Bible. Their case is viewed as not the less interesting and encouraging on this account. The Bible is both self-explanatory and self-defensive; and its glorious truths are at work both in the world and in the Church, enlightening and impressing the world, and strengthening and enlarging the Church by accessions from the world. Both the providence and Spirit of God are on the side of His Word, and render it instrumental in effecting these results.

The actual intercourse of the students, to whom reference is here made, with the missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland, was, in the first instance, what is intimated in the following brief statement, signed by the Rev. Dr. Wilson, and the Rev. Adam White, and published on the 24th of June last:—

On the 14th June 1856, the following letter was put into the hands of "the Rev. Dr. Wilson and the Rev. Adam White," to whom it was addressed, by the parties whose names it bears :—

BOMBAY, 13th June 1856.

REVEREND SIRs,—We the undersigned, young men attending the Elphinstone Institution, take (the) liberty to express to you our sentiments relating (to) the PARSI RELIGION and CHRISTIANITY.

We are fully convinced, by the grace of God, that Parsiism is a *false* religion ; and it consists of VAGUE and EXTRAVAGANT principles. It is the INVENTION of man ; not the REVELATION of God. We have found out, after inquiring nearly two or three years after the TRUE RELIGION, that every comfort, joy, hope, success, and every good thing in this world, as well as in the world to come, are concentrated in the Lord Jesus. We have now the greatest pleasure to inform you, that as we are fully convinced of the TRUTH of CHRISTIANITY, we wish to be baptized, and to be admitted into the visible Church of Christ. It gives us the greatest pleasure, by the grace of God, to say that we have resolved to come out in the light, which enlightens the heart and comforts the soul. We are now in a position where SALVATION is at hand and very near to us. We have resolved to come in(to) a religion which is revealed to us by the only-begotten Son of God. Up to this time, Dear Sirs, we were so blind, that although we had eyes to see, we did not know the way of Righteousness and Truth. We are prepared, by God's help, to suffer the hardship and trials that await us for the sake of our Lord. Whatever sufferings we may have to undergo—whether the want of our daily food and clothing, or the separation from our dear relatives and friends, or shame and persecution, whatsoever,—we, trusting in God, and having him on our right hand, shall, we pray and hope, be able "to follow the Lord fully." We are much moved by the sorrows and sufferings which shall befall our parents by this public step of ours ; but what can we do ?

Salvation we *must* have. We leave them to God, and pray to him to support them in the midst of their afflictions, and open their eyes to know that what we have done is nothing but right. If we stay with our parents, we are sure we shall not be able to walk according to our conscience.

We therefore humbly beg of you to give us shelter in your house, and defend us from the hand of our relations. Nothing has led us to join the Christian Church but the pure hope and desire of the salvation of our souls. We know and are sure that "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."—We remain, Reverend and Dear Sirs, yours obediently,

•  
BEHRAMJÍ KERSASJÍ.  
DARASHA RATTONJÍ.  
BHIKAJÍ ARDASERJÍ.  
NASSARWANJÍ BARJORJÍ.

The antecedents of the delivery of this letter, as far as the missionaries are concerned, were as follows :—Behrámjí called upon Dr. Wilson, in the commencement of November 1855, when he stated that he was desirous of making his acquaintance, and obtaining from him some information and books of which he stood in need. He particularly mentioned, that, as he was expected to deliver an essay before a students' literary society, he felt desirous of treating of some *moral* subject, which, he was sure, would excite more attention than any scientific subject of which he could treat, as he had seen on the occasion of one of his friends delivering an essay on the "Omnipresence of God." He added, that he wished to borrow a volume of "Sermons," which might suggest some theme which might be suitable for his treatment in the essay which he intended to prepare. Dr. Wilson promised to look through his library, with a view to the selection for him of such a volume of discourses as he had indicated ; and, in the meantime, after holding with him some general and religious conversation, presented him with a copy of his own sermon to the

Pársís,\* and invited him to repeat his visits to the mission-house, whenever he might find it convenient. Behrármjī returned to Dr. Wilson on the 24th November, when he said he had felt much interested in the perusal of the sermon to the Pársís, a brief outline of which he readily repeated, as an introduction to the conversation which followed. On leaving the mission-house, he received in loan the fifth volume of Saurin's Sermons, which, he said, after glancing at its contents and reading a portion of it, was exactly such a work as he had been in search of. This book, with marks of some of the more notable passages which had attracted his attention, he duly returned on a subsequent visit to Ambrolie. On the 18th March, Behrármjī attended a public lecture delivered by Dr. Wilson, on the Six Philosophical Schools of the Hindus. Owing to Dr. W.'s journey from Bombay to Mahábaleshwar and back again, this young man had no further intercourse with him till the 14th of June, the day after Dr. W.'s return to Bombay. Having procured, however, from a native friend, an introduction to the Rev. J. Murray Mitchell, he had three or four interviews with him, when he read with him a portion of Mr. Mitchell's Letters to Indian Youth, and another publication. Towards the end of May, the three other Pársí students, as well as Behrármjī, made the acquaintance, on the shores of Back Bay, of Hají Ghulám Masih, a zealous and judicious Christian convert of the Free Church Mission, who is accustomed occasionally to repair to that locality, with the view of imparting Christian instruction to such natives as may be disposed to enter into conversation with him. They had only a few meetings with him, when they expressed a wish to make the acquaintance, through him, of a missionary at Ambrolie. They were introduced by Hají to the Rev. Adam White, there residing, on or about the 29th May, when they began to attend him for conference and religious instruction, holding with him altogether eight or ten meetings for this purpose. Behrármjī, also, soon joined their circle. They had several interviews,

\* Behrármjī now states, that he had long previously found access to this discourse at the house of a Pársí friend.

also, with the Rev. Hormazdjí Pestonjí, and attended several public services in the mission-house. On the 9th of June, Mr. White wrote thus respecting them to Dr. Wilson:—"There are three or four Pársís belonging to the Elphinstone Institution, who came to me lately seeking instruction, but whose minds had previously been impressed, partly by reading and partly by conversation with the converts, or at least the convinced, [who have not yet joined the Christian Church,] who are just on the point of forsaking all to follow Christ. They do not wish it to be known before they have taken the step, lest they should be put under bodily restraint. They are earnestly bent, to all appearance, on coming out from their people and seeking instruction with a view to baptism. They wish to take this step without delay. I have advised them to wait until your return, as I should not be able to speak to their friends,\* from whom much disturbance is to be feared. I told them that you would be here on Wednesday." Dr. Wilson's first interview with three of the youths was on Friday the 13th of June, the day after his return to Bombay, on which occasion he renewed his acquaintance with Behrámjí. The whole of them he recommended, as, indeed, Mr. White had done before, to stay with their relatives during their further religious inquiries, if they could obtain liberty of conscience, and would be permitted to abstain from all heathen rites and ceremonies, of which before God they disapproved. They repeatedly assured the missionaries that liberty of conscience would *not* be accorded them among the Pársís, and besought them to give them protection, in the terms employed in the letter with which this document commences. The missionaries finally informed them that they could and would give them due protection; but that everything would depend on their own willingness to remain with them, for the enjoyment of the religious instruction of which they stood in need. They were told that the question of their baptism would be

\* Mr. White, having but lately arrived in India, has not yet been able to study the Gujarátí, the language of the Pársís.

postponed till they had gone through a reasonable course of Christian probation.

On the morning of Monday the 16th June, the four youths appeared at the mission-house with a portion of their clothes and books, including Dr. Wilson's larger work on the Pársí Religion, Mr. Mitchell's Letters to Indian Youths, Dr. Glasgow's Gujarátí Metrical Version of the Psalms, Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion, etc., all of which they had procured independently of any missionaries. A legal agent, who had been called with a view to notice the circumstances in which they were there received, prepared in their presence the following minute which was duly read to and assented by them.

“AMBROLIE, 16th June 1856.

“Behrámjí Kersasjí, aged 18½ years.

Dáráshá Rattonjí, aged 17 years and 8 months.

Bhikají Ardesbir, will be 18 on 1st July.

Nassarwánjí Barjorjí, aged 19 years and 9 months.

“These Pársís came here to-day, and expressed their determination to make a public profession of Christianity. Being apprehensive of ill-usage if they returned to their homes, they requested Dr. Wilson to allow them to remain in the mission-house here. Dr. Wilson promised to give them house-room and protection, and told them that they should also write to their wives and ask them to join them if they would. The young men read some Gujarátí letters which they had written to their relatives, informing them of the steps they determined to take. The youths have, up to the present time, been students in the Elphinstone Institution, and seem to have come to the conclusion at which they have now arrived by inquiring and thinking for themselves. Dr. Wilson tells them, and they know, that they are welcome to the mission-house, but at liberty to leave it when they choose.

“JNO. MACFARLANE.

“Witness, M. Young.”

The Gujarátí letters to the relatives of the students having been duly delivered, a great rush of Pársís was immediately made to the mission-house. A guard of European and Native constables, however, under Mr. Forjett, the superintendent of police, who had been called for the occasion, prevented any mischief from being done, if indeed any mischief was intended. The relatives of the youths, and many of their acquaintances, at the request of the youths themselves, had free access to them, and used their best and worst endeavours to induce them to refrain from accomplishing their purpose to embrace Christianity, and to consent to return to their own homes. They plied them in vain for nearly three days, almost without interruption, with every possible argument and representation, and with the agency, as suited them for the moment, of devout Zoroastrians, sober Deists, arrogant Scoffers, and professing Inquirers, most of whom seemed equally anxious to thwart the object which they had in view. At length the parties dealing with them came forward with the offer of express pledges and guarantees that their religious liberty should be respected at their homes, and that they should be allowed freely to attend the missionaries for further instruction; while they sent them message after message, that their mothers, whom they had seen at the mission-house in great distress, were actually *dying* from grief at their refusal to join their circle. On the evening of Wednesday the 16th June, they prevailed with these measures, on Dáráshá, to return to his family; and on the subsequent Friday, on Nassarwánjí and Bhikájí. Behrámjí remains firm in his determination to embrace Christianity; and, distrusting the pledges and promises which have been offered and made, continues to believe that he does most justice to his convictions and spiritual wants when he seeks the society and encouragement of the followers of that faith to which his own studies and inquiries have led him.

BOMBAY, 24th June 1856.

Respecting the three youths who left the mission-

house in the circumstances above-mentioned, it is not expedient to say more at present, than that it is much feared that justice has not been done to their religious views and moral impressions. Behrámjí, who strenuously resisted the many and strong temptations with which in the first instance he was assailed in common with his fellow-students, has continued to justify the hopes with which his case was regarded by his Christian friends. After receiving daily and hourly instruction in the mission-house, and occasionally in the Free General Assembly's Institution, for three months, and affording many pleasing proofs of his sincerity and devotedness, he was admitted into the visible church on the 31st August last, when the following Sermon and Baptismal Address were delivered, and when Behrámjí himself, in the interesting and affecting Personal Statement, also here printed, "witnessed a good confession before many witnesses." The supplementary article on Religious Inquiry and Religious Confession, is taken from a Lecture delivered to the students of Bombay a few weeks previously.

The Sermon briefly treats of the Star of Bethlehem, and the visit of the Magi seeking the Born-king of the Jews, both in their literal and symbolical import. It directs attention to the first manifestation of the Messiah to the Gentiles, and to the signs of the times in India, considered in their highest relations, and with reference to the responsibility of those who should observe and interpret them. It points to providential dispensations and agencies,



which call upon the people of India to "turn to God from idols, to serve the living and true God ; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who hath delivered us from the wrath to come." The Baptismal Service, by Mr. White, exhibits the peculiarities of both the solemn commencement and future progress of Christian discipleship and profession. The personal statement of the young convert explains and vindicates the important step which, by Divine grace, he has been enabled to take, as well as calls upon his companions in study to imitate his example. The remarks on Religious Inquiry and Confession are principally designed to form a quiet protest against methods frequently resorted to by the natives of India to prevent the profession of Christianity by the young, and to lead earnest and sincere inquirers of that promising class of the community to form a calm judgment of the peculiar temptations with which they are assailed when they seek to avow their attachment to the truth as it is in Jesus. To the friends of missions, who have requested their publication, as well as to those who are the objects of the missionary enterprise, they may not, through the Divine favour, prove unacceptable. The movement towards Christianity on the part of the students of Bombay, in which they have originated, still continues ; and as these pages have been going through the press, two other students, one a Muhammadan and the other a Pársi, have reached the portals of the visible Christian Church, into which they are anxiously seeking ad-

mission. Individuals of mature and advanced years, too, have come forward to the same position. May God perfect that which concerns them; and to Him be all the praise.

J. W.

BOMBAY, *December* 1856.

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### NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

AN account of the Conversion and Baptism of the two Students here referred to, is added to the Illustrative Documents, reprinted from the first edition of this little volume.



## THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

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*"We have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."*—MATT. ii. 2.

IN describing the visit of the Magi to Bethlehem, Matthew evidently carries us beyond the ordinary circle of providential dispensations, and introduces us into the region of miracles. In doing this, he makes no extravagant demand on our faith, and presents to the eye of our candid contemplation no incongruous scene. The Creator of the universe remains to all eternity its Governor. The physical records of the earth, as cautiously interpreted by the science of geology, indubitably show to us that since the first creative and formative processes connected with our globe commenced, there have been many miraculous forthputtings of the Divine power, in fitting it for the abode of man, and in the creation of the innumerable species of plants and animals which, after living and dying, are now entombed in the rocky layers and beds of its crust. That Divine

wisdom and power which thus miraculously prepared the world for the residence of man in a physical sense, may have continued to be exercised for the suitable training of man in a moral sense. There is no difficulty in supposing, that, as testified by the Bible, miraculous interpositions were continued after the formation of man, for his instruction in the nature and responsibility of his position as the lord of the world on which he dwelt, and the intelligent and ministering priest of the visible universe by which he was surrounded ; and that, even after he had fallen from his holy and happy state by the transgression of revealed law, God may have actually condescended to hold direct intercourse with him, in order to make known to him a scheme of salvation by a Redeemer, and maintain him and his believing descendants in a state of allegiance to him, as the God both of mercy and holiness. There is an infancy in the individual life of man, when he requires to be cared for and guided by external parental efforts and appliances ; and there is an infancy in society and the Church, the godly portion of society, when such appliances, on a scale demanding the special interference of God, may be required for the training and culture of society and the Church. The traditions of all the nations of the earth are in favour of the

idea that God has actually held gracious converse with man, independently of the still small voice of the works of both His creation and providence. Miraculous interpositions are actually recorded in the Bible ; and, even independently of its authority, our belief in them is countenanced by the exigencies and harmonies of general history. The direct intercommunion of God with man in a paradisiacal state, is asserted by all the ancient books of the religions of the East—Indian, Persian, and Chinese, however greatly they may err in their descriptions. The Sphinxes of Egypt, Chaldea, and Assyria, and the Griffins of Persia, guarding the entrances to the palaces and temples, and even the Cerberi of the Greeks and Romans guarding their Hades, bear a startling analogy to the warder Cherubim of the garden of Eden. The occurrence of the Deluge is consonant with ancient Hindu and other oriental tradition, as well as with the Hebrew history.\* The enslavement of the Israelitish race in Egypt is

\* The Hindu traditions of the flood are to be found in the Mahábhárata, and in the Matsya, Agni, and Bhágavata Puránas, in connexion with the Fish-Avatára. Though associated with extravagances and incongruities of description, they so agree, in some remarkable features, with the Mosaic narrative, as to be attributed to the same source as it by Sir William Jones, Maurice Burnouf, Lassen, Ewald, Neve, and other orientalists, looking at them from very different points of view.

certified not only by its peculiar records, in this matter not to be doubted on any principles of historical judgment, but by the Egyptian historian Manetho, and the paintings on the Egyptian tombs ; and how that depressed and oppressed race could have been freed from that bondage, under a people so powerful and so stubborn in their establishments as the Egyptians, without Divine interference, it would be almost impossible to show. The law of Moses purports to have been delivered to the body of the Israelites with miraculous manifestations of the Divine presence and sanction ; and how, with this averment, it could have been received by the Israelites at the time we find it in their hands, if these manifestations had not been real, no explanation can be offered. The Israelites entered Canaan from Egypt from the south and south-east—for they never thoroughly conquered the Philistines to the south-west—and how, without bread from heaven and water from the flinty rock, they could pass through the barren deserts, the region of the valley of the shadow of death, in numbers sufficient to occupy Canaan, is more than infidelity can tell, though Volney, mistaking the character of the desert of the wanderings, has altogether overlooked the sources of their supply, when he says, “The desert of Tih is that into which Moses con-

ducted the Jews, and kept them for a whole generation, to initiate them into the art of war, and transform a multitude of shepherds into a nation of conquerors."\* The cleaving of the impetuous floods of the Jordan, for the passage of the Israelites, is to the observant traveller the most easy way of accounting for the transference of the Israelites to its western shores. The conquest of the Canaanites in their mountainous abodes, and with their walled towns and cities, by a people emerging from an absolute desert, however considerable in point of numbers, suggests such a degree of miraculous aid as was enjoyed by Joshua and his successors ; and on the supposition that this aid was granted, there is nothing beyond the expectancy of the circumstances in the idea of its continuance, when needful, under both the judges and the kings. Such a miracle as that which is recorded as having taken place in connexion with the reformer Elijah on Mount Carmel, in the reign of Ahab, one of the most remarkable in the Bible, seems necessary for the ability of Elijah to bring about, in a season of remarkable defection from the worship of Jehovah, probably through the popular indignation, the awful slaughter attributed to him of the priests of Baal and Ashtaroth, condemned before the Lord, by whose

\* Volney's *Travels*, vol. ii. pp. 290-291.



Spirit Elijah was excited and guided.\* The wonderful destruction of the hosts of Sennacherib, in the reign of Hezekiah, when their leaders "spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man," and which followed the prayer of the king and the prophet Isaiah to Him who was the God not only of Jerusalem but of "heaven,"† is confirmed by the Assyrian tablets deciphered by Colonel Rawlinson, though, as might be expected, without any intimation of its cause.‡ The miraculous aid granted to the Israelites in these and other similar circumstances, was aid directly granted for the support of the cause of Jehovah, which, except among themselves, had either altogether perished or ceased effectively to penetrate the life of a people. There is no miracle recorded in the Old Testament which had not a worthy occasion; and the expectation that miracles would be renewed on the appearance of the Saviour, promised from the very beginning, was not only a matter of prophecy, but otherwise of reasonable expectation. We speak here solely from the orthodox point of view,

\* 1 Kings xviii.

† 2 Kings xviii., xix.; 2 Chron. xxxii.; Isa. xxxvii.

‡ See the Address of Sir Henry Rawlinson before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

for it is with it, and it only, that we have to do on the principles which we have to defend and illustrate. God manifest in the flesh was and is the great mystery of godliness ; and it is not wonderful that it was marked by signs and wonders on the earth below and the heaven above, by intercommunings of the angelic and human natures, by the extraordinary stirrings of the human spirit awake and asleep, and by the restoration of the gift of prophecy, according to the demands of the times. The absence of them on such a glorious occasion, would have been altogether out of harmony with the whole course of preceding revelation.

The miraculous manifestations which were actually made when that all-important event occurred, have been recorded by two of the four Evangelists, the authors of the memoirs of the life of Christ, which, from the earliest ages, have been denominated the Gospels. One of these Gospels is supplementary to the other ; and each of them is written from an independent point of view. Matthew, the author of the one, who wrote primarily for the Jews, as is evident from his treatment of Jewish genealogies, prophecies, and customs, and other circumstances, not altogether excluding the Gentiles from his consideration, notices the early manifestation of the Saviour to the Gentiles, through

the Star of Bethlehem and the visit of the Magi. Luke, who wrote primarily for the Gentiles, notices the still earlier manifestations connected with the advent of the Redeemer to the Jews, through the angelic visits to Zacharias, to Mary, and to Elizabeth, and other Jewish worthies, and their inspiration by the Holy Ghost; and through the effulgent appearance of multitudes of the heavenly host to the pious shepherds of Bethlehem, when the key-note of the whole song of salvation, which will never cease, was heard,—

“Glory to God in the highest;  
And on earth peace, good-will toward men.” \*

In the separate and varying accounts there is no contradiction. The reserve practised by each of the writers is quite intelligible on the principle which John, another Evangelist, had in his eye, when he says, “Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” † The miraculous Star of Bethlehem and the visit of the Magi, or wise men, to that locality, then, we accept as veritable events in history. The attempts of infidelity to impugn the narrative on scientific

\* Luke ii. 14.

† John xx. 30, 31.

and mythical grounds, both in Christendom and Heathendom, however bold and keen, appear to us singularly inept and impotent, as the briefest consideration of its incidents does not fail to show. That narrative, we hold, is self-consistent and credible from beginning to end.

The Magi of history—and we suppose that it is in the historical sense that the denomination is used by Matthew—were mainly the priests and philosophers of the Persian, Median, and later Babylonian empires. It has been maintained that a revelation to such parties by the heavenly bodies would be a confirmation to them of the science, falsely so called, of astrology. But two insuperable objections to this representation immediately occur. First, God in His mercy may frequently overtake and reclaim a sinner even when wandering far from Him in the paths of error and sin. Many such instances are known to every intelligent Christian. Chrysostom, in his homily on the very event before our notice, makes this appropriate and striking observation: “Behold the wisdom of God, how He called them [the Magi]! He did not send a prophet, for they would not have received one; nor an apostle, for they would not have attended to him; nor Scriptures, for they knew them not; but He draws them from their error by familiar and everyday things.

Since they were Magi, and their art related to the stars, a star appears to them drawing them from a foreign country—a star draws them to free them from the bondage of the stars. . . . This was true condescension, to let Himself down to others in order to raise them to Him. Thus Christ did when He called the men of the east; for as He, to call men, veiled Himself in human nature and form, so He called the astrologers by a star.\* The star, it is to be noticed, summoned their attention to a country far beyond the sacred land of Zoroastrianism, and all its erroneous associations. It was as competent, morally speaking, we hold, for God to draw the attention of an astrologer to a Saviour by a star, as it is for Him, providentially, to reveal a truth in chemical science to an alchemist. Secondly, we can look to the Magi as dealing with astronomy, as well as with astrology; and connect, if we choose, the monition of God with this latter occupation, which is so favourable to devotion that it has been said by the poet, that

“The undevout astronomer is mad.”

The star-gazers of the east, of Chaldea and India, and we may perhaps venture to say of

\* Chrysost. *Homilia habita postquam Presbyter Gotthus concionatus fuerit*, par. 5, quoted by Neander in his *Memorials of Christian Life*, Bohn's edit. p. 127. Chrysostom expresses the same idea in his *Homilies on Matthew*.

Persia, laid the very foundations of the science of astronomy, recording observations, and forming astronomical tables, which science, notwithstanding all its advancement, still delights to recognise. The Magi may thus have noticed the Star of Bethlehem while they were engaged in the pursuit of truth.\*

The coupling by the Magi of the star of

\* In connexion with the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, *Rab-Mag* (the chief *Magus*) is mentioned as one of the "princes" of that king by Jeremiah (xxxix. 3). By Herodotus, in his notices of the Medes and Persians, the Magi are spoken of as interpreters of dreams, visions, earthly omens, and heavenly portents; as indispensable for sacrifices; and as the slayers of animals, and zealous in the destruction of those of them which have noxious habits. By most orientalists, as by Gesenius in his *Thesaurus*, the word *Mag* or *Magus* is supposed to be derived from the Zend "*Meh, Maé, Máo*," agreeing with the Sanskrit *Mahat, Maha*, and Latin *Magnus*, all from the root *Mah*, to become "great or large." *Mazó*, from *Maz*, corresponding with the Sanskrit *Mah*, (and having *Mazyó* for the comparative, and *mazista* for the superlative,) is, however, the Zend for "great," while *Máo* in the nominative and *Máongh*—in the inflexions, is the Zend for "moon," "month," or "measurement," corresponding with the Sanskrit *más*, of the same meaning. The Persian for *Magus* is *Magh*, probably from the same root. *Mási* is the Sanskrit for "measurer," "calculator;" and this is possibly the meaning of *Máoghí* or *Magus*. Compare with this Burnouf's *Commentaire sur le Yaçna*, p. 288. *Magus* does not, as far as I am aware, occur in any form as a denominative in the Zend writings. *Mag*, with the interposed *n*, is found in the Kurdish languages, as applied to the moon, *Mung, Mahang, Maang*, as in Appendix vi. to vol. i. of Rich's *Residence in Kurdistan*. *Mobed* is probably from *Máoghípati*, a master-Magus.

Bethlehem with the Messianic expectation of the Jews, can be easily accounted for. The Israelites had been taken to the territories in which they were to be found during the captivities recorded in Scripture ; and numbers of them had settled in Persia in later times, as is evident from the Book of Esther, and other historical documents. Their Scriptures had been translated into the Greek language, and widely disseminated. "The fulness of time," for the advent of the Redeemer, was approaching ; and the Messiah had become the "desire of all nations," as well as the "consolation of Israel." The Persians had participated in the desire for deliverance and rest as well as other peoples.\* In regard to the "star," one of the principal physical observations of the Magi would probably respect its zenith or highest apparent point in the heavens at midnight, as it would

\* Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 13), as is well known, speaks of the prevalence of a persuasion, founded on the prediction of ancient sacerdotal books, that the East should resume its power, and that a sovereign of the world should issue from Judea ; and Suetonius says (in *Vesp.* 4) that over the whole East there had prevailed an ancient and permanent opinion that a sovereign of the world should be furnished by Judea. The Persian expectations connected with Sosiosh have been referred to a similar belief ; but they require yet a thorough critical investigation. Though Tacitus and Suetonius wrote after the birth of Christ, they allude to expectations of an ancient character, extended through many lands.

somewhere appear. This zenith-point, they might ascertain to be over the land of Judea, to which, under the admonition of the Spirit of God co-operating with the providence of God, they resolved to proceed, and to which they actually went, after the star for a season, as it would seem, had ceased to attract their particular attention. All this might have induced them, when they arrived from the east at Jerusalem to say, "Where is he that is born king (or rather, the born-king) of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

It was but natural that the arrival in the holy city of the foreigners from a distant land, with this inquiry and intimation, should cause excitement and agitation. To the depraved Herod the Great, as he was called by the lips of flattery, there reigning, and who held his tenure of office under a foreign and among the Jews unpopular power, that of the Romans, and to the immediate authorities under him, and even to the many Jews who had failed to live in the spirit of the ancient prophecies, it must have been anything but pleasing. His first act was to ask the opinion of the chief priests and scribes of the law, as to the determined place of the birth of the Christ; and he had no sooner received the answer, founded on a right



interpretation of the prophet Micah, that it was at Bethlehem,\* and made strict inquiry at the Magi about the time of the appearance of the star, which he would suppose to indicate the birth, than he directed them to proceed to that town, and to search diligently for the young child, doubtless that, under the pretence of showing him respect, he might seek his destruction. Other methods of proceeding, we allow, he might have adopted ; but what he actually did in this instance, was quite consistent with his character for cunning and cruelty.

On the departure of the Magi for Bethlehem, the sign in the heavens which had attracted their attention in their own country again appeared to them, filling them, as might be expected after all that happened, with exceeding great joy. About what this sign, popularly called a "star" in the sacred narrative, really was, many opinions have been formed. Some have considered it a meteor, some a comet, some a remarkable conjunction of the planets, some a mere luminous appearance, some the angelic brightness which appeared to the shepherds, some the effulgence of the Holy Spirit, and some a star in the sense of astronomy. What-

\* See, on the application of Micah's prophecy "only to Immanuel and the Angel of the great council," Euseb. *Prep. Evang.* lib. vii. 2.

ever it may have been, it was doubtless effective for the purpose for which it appeared. From what we know as to its visibility in the east, we are strongly inclined to consider it an actual star. It is said of it that it "went before" the Magi, or wise men, "till it came and stood over the place where the young child was." It has been objected to this representation, that Bethlehem being only about six miles distant from Jerusalem, the star could not have had any visible difference of parallax, to indicate a difference of apparent position, at Jerusalem and Bethlehem. But where is the difficulty of our admitting, in the region of miracle, a supernatural direction and movement of the astral light on this occasion for the guidance of the Magi, under the power of that great Being who went before His people in the wilderness in a pillar of cloud, and "in a pillar of fire to give them light," and who arrested the sun so that it went not down upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon? There is another consideration in the case which should not be overlooked. The Magi, when travelling from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, were proceeding southward nearly on the meridional line; and during their two hours of travel, the place of the star, supposing it to be rising in the east, would in reference to Bethlehem be changed thirty de-

grees of the circle of the heavens, while at the same time it would in its apparent motion be approaching Bethlehem, where we have supposed its zenith-point to be. Our mythical interpreters are not always the best astronomers. I here repeat what I have many years ago said both to Hindus and Pársís, that, "In the appearance of this star, or even in its disappearance, supposing it no longer visible, there is nothing inconsistent with the power of God, and nothing even inconsistent with the experience of astronomers. 'Several new stars,' says a distinguished mathematician of our country,\* 'have appeared for a time, and then vanished; some that are given in the ancient catalogues, are no longer to be found; while others are constantly and distinctly visible, which have not been described by the ancients; some stars, like *beta* in the Whale, have gradually increased in brilliancy; others, like *delta* in the Great Bear, have been constantly diminishing in brightness; and a great number sustain a periodical variation in their brilliancy. The new star which was seen by Tycho in 1572, in the constellation Cassiopeia, suffered very remarkable changes. On a sudden it became so brilliant that it surpassed in brightness even Venus and Mercury, and was visible on the meridian in the day-time.

\* The late Mr. Barlow of the Royal Military Academy.

Its light then began to diminish, till it disappeared, about sixteen months after it had been observed. The new star which appeared in 1603 (1604), in the constellation Serpentarius, exhibited similar phenomena, and disappeared after being visible for some months.\* If ever there was an occasion for celestial phenomena marking an event in creation's history, we say, it was when God, in very deed, began to dwell with man on the earth."

When the Magi were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother. How far the Spirit of God co-operated with the providence of God, by instructing them on the happy occasion, we cannot tell. They fell down and worshipped the infant, showing him the deepest reverence and homage. They also opened their treasure-bags, and presented unto him gifts of the chosen articles of Eastern commerce, gold and frankincense and myrrh, analogous to the royal and noble presents still offered in the East. This was the first tribute of the Gentiles to the Saviour, the Prince of Peace, who, according to prophecy, was given to be a light to the Gentiles, and salvation to the ends of the earth. The hand of God was not the less in the occurrence, that its symbolical import might not at

\* Barlow's *Mathematical Dictionary*. See, on Temporary Stars, also Sir John Herschel's *Astronomy*, pp. 393, 394.

the time be fully known to those who were most directly connected with it. The Divine intercommunion with them was again repeated : " Being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod " at Jerusalem, " they returned to their own country another way." Their intelligence and their affections had been addressed both by the works and Spirit of God. They had beheld the child of wonder with their bodily eyes. Their journey was not in vain. The thought is certainly a pleasing one, that, as believed by the ancient Church, they were among the earliest converts to the Christian faith, and harbingers to the Saviour, in the land of their nativity.\* Their gifts, as has often been noticed, might, to the poor family of Joseph and Mary, be the provision for the journey to Egypt, which, for the preservation of the child from the cruel wrath of Herod, they were soon required to make. The whole transaction forms one of the most appropriate and beautiful symbols of the works and providence and word and Spirit of God pointing to the Saviour, which we can imagine ; and as such I would use it, with

\* In the " *Opus Imperfectum*," usually printed with the works of Chrysostom, but evidently by another hand, probably of the fourth century, it is said that they were baptized in their own country by the apostle Thomas, and became his assistants in preaching (*Facti sunt adjutores predicationis illius*).—*Oper. Chrysost. tom. vi. edit. 1835, p. 756.*

the Divine assistance, on the present occasion, when a son of the Magi of Persia, in this the land of their last dispersion and refuge, publicly declares that he has been conducted in a remarkable way to the Christian Church, and says to us all, "I have found him that is the Born-king of the Jews, and am come to worship him as my Lord and Saviour!"

The age of miracles appears to have passed away with the infancy of the Church; but on miracles Christianity is not now dependent, even in such a country as India, which age after age has been involved in darkness and error. There are other remarkable instruments and agencies here pointing to Christ, which may well be observed and understood by those of candid and considerate mind. Only a few of the more obvious of them, we can mention at present. The British power, here extended and established, and working, points to Christ. Much of the general literature of the British nation, as here known, points to Christ. The Christian Church, here begun to be formed, points to Christ. The Bible, here introduced, translated, and disseminated, points to Christ. The preaching here of the doctrine of the Cross, by the messengers of the truth, points to Christ. Those who here seek may find. Those who here look may live. There are "signs of the times" here developed,

most precious to those who can offer up the prayer for Divine light and guidance, and cherish its associated hope :

“ Show me thy ways, O LORD ;  
Teach me thy paths.  
Lead me in thy truth and teach me :  
For thou art the God of my salvation. . . .  
Good and upright is the LORD,  
Therefore will he teach sinners in the way.  
The meek will he guide in judgment,  
And the meek will he teach his way.”

1. We say, that the extension, establishment, and working of the British power in India, points to Christ.

By most wonderful providences, unforeseen movements, remarkable openings, timely deliverances, and unsought extensions, the British power has been introduced into, and established and upheld in India. It commenced with the arrangements of legitimate commerce ; and it has generally advanced to its present magnitude without any determinate plan or purpose on the part of its founders. The immediate motive leading to it, most commonly, has been the desire of maintaining righteous engagements made with the inhabitants of India themselves. It has risen and grown, notwithstanding the jealousy and opposition of other European powers, some of which had begun here to develop themselves before the advent of the British to the

shores of India. In the conquest of the land, the sons of India, flocking to our standard, and supported by the resources of the country itself, have been the principal instruments of fighting the battles of Britain, and maintaining its pre-eminence. The sovereignty of India, as the issue, has been given to a Christian nation, to a Protestant nation, and to the most Protestant, most enlightened, most philanthropic, and most powerful nation of Europe. The consequence has been, the deliverance of India, with exceptional districts peculiarly situated, from violence and oppression; and the bestowment upon it of peace, law, order, and religious liberty, blessings which it never enjoyed under any of its dynasties, however remote. Britain, notwithstanding all her faults and shortcomings—and these we have no wish either to excuse or palliate—is in reality taking India into her kind and parental embrace, seeking to bestow upon it by degrees all the blessings of which she herself is in possession, or which she herself is striving to obtain. She is labouring to lighten and adjust its burdens, and to multiply its agricultural resources. She has given the whole oceans of the globe to be the quiet pathway of its commerce. She is joining district to district, and province to province, by roads and bridges, and excavations of mountain passes, and by a system of communi-



cation, by steam and lightning, and land and sea and air, which its inhabitants deem miraculous. She is seeking to elevate all its tribes in the scale of humanity. She is seen, as an angel of mercy, arresting alike the hand of the infatuated orphan son kindling the funeral pyre to burn the living as well as the dead parent ; the hand of the parent cruelly put forth to destroy, in the pride of tribe and caste, the unwelcome female child ; and the hand of the misguided and miserable devotee seeking to extinguish his own life. She has put an end to the drink-offerings and meat-offerings of human blood and human flesh to gods and devils. She is seeking to dispense justice and judgment throughout the land, improving from time to time the instruments of her administration, many of whom, as can be easily accounted for, are yet but imperfect and unsuitable. The enlightenment of India, in literature, art, and science, and the facilitating the diffusion of the truth throughout its borders, have been, and are now, more than ever her anxious care. The general admission of the natives of India, notwithstanding the zeal and activity of unpatriotic grumblers and graspers, is, that they have been placed under a wise, and just, and merciful, and liberal, and philanthropic government ; but with this admission they have not to stop.

They have to recognise, and gratefully recognise, the hand of Providence, wonderfully raised and employed, in dispensing the inestimable blessings which they enjoy. Those of them who are receiving, or have received, an education which fits them to contemplate God in the history of the nations of the earth, are called upon to think of the purpose and tendency of those Divine dispensations, which are so palpably ordered for India's benefit. They have to do more than this. They have to trace the wisdom, justice, mercy, liberality, and philanthropy of Britain to their source, which is undoubtedly Christianity. It is this Divine system of faith and practice which forms and sustains the spirit of British benevolence and justice as exhibited in India. It is Christianity which has all along pled for the mitigation and removal of the woes and wrongs of India. It is Christianity which is the effective support of all that is true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report in the British dominion in India. Into the claims of Christianity which has these blessed effects, the natives of India, and especially those of them who have enjoyed the benefits of instruction, are bound to inquire.

2. The general literature of the British nation, as known to the natives of India, points to Christ.

This observation I make, with the admission that a large portion of that literature is frivolous, or useless, or mischievous, or only evil and that continually. I have in view only the main facts, that much of the literature of Britain, which has the most general and continuous currency, is of a Christian character, and that as far as our general literature differs from that of other nations in its purity, elevation, sublimity, tenderness, truthfulness, and heavenward tendency, it is indebted for its pre-eminence to Christianity. The homage of British authors of the highest status to the great standard of Christianity, I lately distinctively brought before the notice of many of my native friends in this place; and a few specimens of the expressions of that homage—not as authoritative but as recommendatory—are all that can at present be adduced. What can be more interesting to the studious minds of educated Indian youths than the devout address, to God, of Lord Bacon, after all his thought as a philosopher and moralist, and his experience and disappointments and errors as a courtier and statesman, “Thy creatures have been my books, but Thy Scriptures much more: I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and groves, but I have found Thee in Thy temples,” and his decided declaration, to man, “There never was law, or sect, or

opinion did so much magnify goodness as the Christian faith ;”\* than the decision of Sir Matthew Hale, our great and pious lawyer, that “ There is no book like the Bible for excellent learning, wisdom, and use ;” than the estimate of Locke, the father of our British mental philosophy, that “ The Holy Scriptures are one of the greatest blessings which God bestows upon the sons of men,” and that the New Testament “ has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter ;” than the judgment of the great interpreter of nature’s laws, Sir Isaac Newton, “ We account the Holy Scriptures to be the most sublime philosophy,” and “ there are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatsoever.”† What can be more emphatic and worthy of attention than the testimony of “ the prince and pioneer of orientlists in India,” Sir William Jones, whose accomplishments and literary taste have been universally admired, when he says, “ I have regularly and attentively read the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, this volume, independ-

\* Bacon’s *Essays*, Markby’s edit., p. 26.

† For a considerable number of collected testimonies of this character, the Indian reader is referred to Simpson’s *Plea for Religion*. A new edition of this work, excluding its ecclesiastical portions, is a desideratum for native youth.

ently of its Divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books in whatever language they have been composed ?”\* Or to come to later times, what can be more affecting than “the mighty magician” of fable and romance, as he has been called, Sir Walter Scott, calling on his son-in-law to “read” to him a few days before his death, and, on his asking what book he should read, giving the reply, “And you ask ? . . . there is but one,” and his listening with mild devotion to the fourteenth chapter of John’s Gospel, and his remarking, “Well, this is a great comfort : I have followed you distinctly, and I feel as if I were to be myself again.”† But better than all this verbal homage to the Bible, is the actual pervasion of large portions of our British literature, in every department, by the spirit and principles of the Bible, and by deference to its bright exemplars. This is especially the case in much of our poetry. What can be more interesting than to find our grandest epic and our best moral and lyrical poetry altogether founded on the Bible ?

\* See *Life of Sir William Jones*, prefixed to his Works.

† Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. p. 387.

"The wreath which honours most a poet's brow  
Offends not pure religion : witness thine,  
Delightful Cowper ! greater e'en than thou  
The sightless Milton, who before a shrine  
More glorious far than of the fabled Nine,  
Pour'd forth his soul. Nor want our later days  
Some worthy votaries of an art divine—  
Divinest when it hymns the Giver's praise,  
And bids a Saviour's love inspire its sweetest lays."\*

I have often noticed that the souls of our Indian youths are most deeply stirred by our religious poetry. I remember hearing of an Indian student professing Christianity, and, in reply to the question, What has made you a Christian, saying, "The poets of Great Britain." I have very seldom known a piece of poetry except of a religious character voluntarily committed to memory by a native youth. I hold, then, that the increasing acquaintance of our Indian youth with our British literature,—especially when that literature is impartially and judiciously taught, and the better portions of it are presented to their view by our educational institutions, tract and book societies, public libraries, enterprising booksellers, and benevolent individuals,—may, with the blessing of God, accomplish great good in the land, and lead many, regardless of the voice of their conscience and moral intuitions and convictions, to

\* Bernard Barton.

ask, Where is He that is the Born-king of the Jews, and many, when they have seen Him, to fall down and worship Him as their Lord and Saviour. In connexion with this remark, too, we cannot overlook the fact that in the local authorship of India, both English and vernacular, Christianity has hitherto had and promises to have the predominance, and to lead to the same result. That authorship, notwithstanding the many difficulties connected with it, is far from being of an insignificant character. To it the country is indebted for hundreds and thousands, nay hundreds of thousands, of tracts and pamphlets,—setting forth the character and claims of Jehovah, and the doctrine of pardon and sanctification through His incarnate Son and all-powerful Spirit,—which are being circulated throughout the length and breadth of the land. All the systems of heathen error and erroneous faith in the East, in all their amplitude and intricacies, are by it being unfolded and refuted. Translations are being made of some of the best works in European science and literature. Original works adapted to the thought and habits of the people of India are being prepared and published. The educational appliances of the country, multiplied from day to day, increase the effectiveness of this important agency.

3. The Christian Church, beginning to be formed in India, points to Christ.

There was a time when the distinct personal Christianity of Britons resident in India, was but little exhibited, and little observed. Doubts, in fact, about the English having any religion at all, were entertained by the natives, who were continually asking, "Where is their God, where are their temples, what are their seasons of worship, where are their religious instructors and ministers?" The unchristian and immoral conduct of most of the Britons in India did much to suggest a response in the negative to these inquiries. So bad was the state of matters that the poet Cowper was led to address the Englishman returned from India in the following pungent, and alas! too truthful, strain:—

"Hast thou, though suckled at fair Freedom's breast,  
Exported slavery to the conquer'd East,

\* \* \* \*

Gone thither arm'd and hungry, returned full,  
Fed with the richest veins of the Mogul;  
A despot big with power obtained by wealth,  
And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?  
With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,  
But left their virtues and thine own behind;  
And having trucked thy soul, brought home the fee  
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?"

These times, in the merciful providence of God, have been happily changed. Britain is now



fairly represented in India by her sons and daughters. There are numerous men and women in the land who make and vindicate a hopeful Christian profession ; and many who are unequivocally Christians in reality as well as in name. They have taken refuge in the grace of the Saviour ; and they have been born again, and born from above, by the word of heavenly truth and the Spirit of the living God. Their hearts and treasures are in heaven, whence also they look for the Saviour Jesus Christ. They devote themselves to a large extent to works of philanthropy and mercy. Some of them follow their own secular pursuits. Some of them are agents of the British Government, and some of the British Churches, sent directly to India for its conversion. They are called, and chosen, and faithful. They are marked men among the natives. Inquiry is excited into the origin of the principles by which they are actuated. They are "taken knowledge of as having been with Jesus." They are happily not the only personal witnesses to the Redeemer's cause in India. The religion of Christ has been tested among the natives of India ; and it has produced exactly the same effects amongst them that it has done in other parts of the world. The native Christian converts connected with the Protestant Missions in India, including old and young, amount to

120,000, a number not inferior to that of all the Zoroastrians in India and Persia, and other parts of the world. This community is growing, by accessions from all classes of the native population, from year to year ; and, notwithstanding all its faults and imperfections, it is advancing in intelligence and purity. It presents numerous examples of remarkable moral transformations. What Paul said to the converts of Corinth may be said to the converts of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras : " Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ? Be not deceived : neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of the Lord."\* These moral transformations, which have been wrought in the midst of us, have not been unnoticed in native society. The converts are neither inanities nor inactivities. Many of them are " living epistles of Christ, known and read of all men." Some of them are effective Christian agents, to whom we shall allude in another connexion, personally pointing to the Saviour

\* 1 Cor. vi. 9-11.

and saying, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!"

4. The Bible, here disseminated and published, is pointing to Christ.

The Bible has come to India in its venerable English version, justly denominated "the standard of the English language," in which form it is now intelligible, through our educational institutions, to hundreds and thousands of Indian youths; and the Bible has been rendered into ten Indian languages, while the New Testament has been translated into five others, and separate Gospels into four others. It forms of itself a Sacred Library, of no fewer than sixty-six distinct writings, but of manageable dimensions, by captains, judges, kings, priests, councillors, governors, prophets, teachers, and apostles, connected with different ages and events, but all directed and guided in its composition by the unerring Spirit of God. From beginning to end, it is loyal to God, whose works of creation, and providence, and grace, it faithfully records and signally illustrates, in a lengthened course of Divine revelation, embracing the history of God's intercommunion with His people, His tuition and discipline of them for their portion on earth and in heaven, His preservation of them amidst the defection and apostasy of the nations from His knowledge and service; and the record of

their devotion, songs of praise, and preceptive, prophetic, and general instruction by word and letter. Christ, the appointed Saviour, promised, prefigured, and expected, is the great theme of its Old Testament, and Christ revealed, glorified, and proclaimed, of its New Testament. In the New Testament, we find the doctrines, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, recorded with all the simplicity and circumstantiality of truth, and with the recognition of the fact, that the majesty and magnificence of the events which it notices, need no human amplification or embellishment to attract or maintain attention. In its four Gospels, it shows to us the origin or foundation of the Christian Church, in the personal ministry of Christ; in its Acts of the Apostles, the erection of the Church by the labours of His chosen and commissioned servants; in its Epistles, the completion and establishment of order and service within the sacred interior of the Church, through the Holy Spirit, the great Teacher sent by Christ from His mediatorial throne on high; and in its Revelation, the assurance of the perpetuity of the Church, notwithstanding all the attempts of the court of hell to prevail against it, and of its final triumph over all opposition, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and when

shall be heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and of mighty thunderings, saying, "Hallelujah (praise ye the Lord), for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." The Bible addresses itself to all without distinction ; and no classes of men have any right to be considered its sole proprietors, or even expounders ; and though capable of illustration from history, geography, criticism, and other sources, it is so plain in its general character that he that runneth may read it. It is accompanied by a body of irrefragable historical evidence, nay, it carries in its own sacred pages the proof of its own Divine origin. It is the very counterpart of the moral wants of man, solving all the grave questions about his relations to God and the future world, which it is alike his duty and interest to propose, and meeting and satisfying the awakened sinner in connexion with all his fears, anxieties, and aspirations. Its pages are brightening from day to day, instead of growing dim by age. While the priests of India, Bráhmans, Mobeds, Játis, and others are ashamed, or afraid, to give their reputed sacred writings to the people, in an intelligible form, we are seeking to give it to every kindred, and country, and tongue, and nation, in hundreds, thousands, nay, millions of copies. We are distributing it with a liberal hand in India. It has found entrance into the Govern-

ment seminaries, though as yet only as a book of reference and consultation, it being alleged that the natives are averse to a more liberal use of it there, lest speaking for itself, even without note or comment, it should convince their youth that it is Divine. It is taught in all the missionary schools and seminaries, and illustrated and applied in all missionary discourses. Intolerant bigots are afraid that justice should be done to it. They dare not permit a comparison of it with their own Shástras and their own Avastás. They are eager to publish infidel attacks upon it, however silly and unreasonable and oft-refuted they may have been ; but they are unwilling that it should itself be perused, and bear testimony in its own cause. It is destined, however, to conquer and prevail. "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater ; so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void ; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I have sent it." The whole Bible is the witness of Christ ; for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The Bible, throughout,

points attention to Him that was born King of the Jews.

5. The preaching of the doctrine of the Cross in India, by the messengers of the truth, points to Christ.

The story of the Cross is contained in the Bible, of which we have already spoken ; but through the voice of the living preacher, as well as the written word, it is getting into the knowledge and intelligence of the people of India, as the principal fact of the Christian faith. Hundreds and thousands of them, in all parts of the country, now know that of Jesus it is held that He is the Son of God ; that He became flesh and dwelt among us ; that He died on the cross as the ransom of sinners from the penal claims of the holy and just and good law of God, which they had broken, but which must be upheld in all its honour and authority ; and that He rose again from the grave, and ascended into heaven, where He now remains as the exalted Saviour and the prevailing Mediator between God and man. This doctrine of the Cross is doubtless to many of them, as to the Greeks of old, only absolute "foolishness ;" and to many of them, as to the Jews, a "stumblingblock ;" but to them that are called among them, whether Hindus or Pársís, or Moghals or Arabs, it will prove the wisdom and the power of God unto

salvation. All that wisdom could devise, and power effect, for the salvation of man, is to be seen in the Cross of Christ. The scheme of salvation involved in it, is reasonable, suitable, and glorious, both as far as God and man are concerned. Though it transcends mere human invention, it meets the highest demands of human anxiety, relative to the manifestation and maintenance of the holiness and justice of God, when the Divine mercy and grace are exercised in pardon and forgiveness, and relative to man's agonizing fears as a conscious sinner, when he feels that he himself can neither satisfy Divine justice nor earn the Divine favour. We find in it the grand moral problem solved, "mercy and truth met together," and "righteousness and peace embracing each other." We see in it both the condemnation of the sinner before God ended ; and spiritual life and purity before God restored. Its Divine excellence in all these respects it is not difficult for us to discover, though it is impossible for us to estimate aright that excellence. The matter simply stands thus. To the man of consideration and reflection, nothing is more grievous than the consciousness of the existence and working of moral evil. The perception and remembrance of sin committed, is to a certain extent unavoidable under the recognition of Divine law ; and the more that is



known by us of this law, either from nature or direct revelation, the greater is seen by us to be the amount and demerit of transgression. Our hearts, as we feel, condemn us ; and God, who is greater than our hearts, and knows all things, does much more condemn us. From the heaven above, and the earth beneath, we hear the awful voice, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." How can we be saved, becomes with us the most important of all inquiries. We are sorry for sin ; but we know that, though this may impede us to some extent in the practice of sin at present, and even for the time to come, it does not interfere with the fact of the past commission of sin and its actual continuance. The tears of our penitence cannot obliterate the record of our guilt in the book of God's remembrance ; and they cannot, with their feeble flood, carry off the dishonour which we have heaped upon God's broken law. "If you repent, you will escape," is never even the announcement of the legislation of man ; and most certainly it cannot be that of the legislation of God. We strive to amend and improve our conduct ; but we can never make our present obedience bear upon our past transgressions ; and we cannot even secure a perfect obedience for the present moment. Universal and uninterrupted and perfect righteousness, we still remember to be the

demand of God's law. We resort to prayer ; but before we can ask, with warrant and confidence, we must see that God has ground to bestow. We make resolutions and vows with reference to the time which is to come ; but, as in the case of our present obedience, we cannot possibly make them a propitiation for the past, or a prevailing provision for the future. We tender ourselves to God ; but we see that, with all our sins and shortcomings, we cannot be accepted as an atoning sacrifice, whatever afterwards may be made of us as an imperfect thank-offering. Religious services and ceremonies, which we mingle with our personal devotedness, when they are even of the best character, cannot satisfy us as serious and anxious inquirers. Those of them which are connected with heathenism, having to do with false and delusive objects of worship, and unbecoming rites and ceremonies, we clearly see, can only add to our sin and misery. No help, we are sure, can come to us, in the matter of our justification before God, from our fellow-men, who are all our fellow-sinners and fellow-offenders. No aid can reach us from the angels of heaven, who have to serve God to the fullest extent of their powers and opportunities, on their own account. Only God, against whose law sin is directed, can extend to us the pardon of its commission. God,

in doing this, if he do it at all, in the exercise of His sovereign grace, must do it in harmony with His unchangeable holiness and justice. He must uphold the dignity and authority of His broken law, while He remits its penalty. He must show the evil of sin, the boundless evil of sin, while He treats the sinner as justified. All this He does in Christ Jesus. This Divine Saviour He chooses and gives as the surety of man, the Son himself voluntarily concurring in the Father's will. On Him, incarnate and dwelling among men, He laid the obligation of magnifying the law by a perfect obedience, and of rescuing the law from injury by the pardon of the sinner, by giving Himself as our ransom and purchase, when He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and when He died, "the just for the unjust," that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The more that is known of the doctrine of the Cross, the more glorious does it appear to be. It is the hope and joy of the sinner laying hold of Christ by faith, who feels that he cannot die both in his own substitute and in his own person. Christ lifted up on the cross, in the sphere of vision, will, according to His own saying, draw all men unto Him. It is the office of the missionary of India thus to raise the Saviour in the sight of men. "We preach Christ crucified," is his description

of his ministry. This ministry, though with inadequate agency, is now conducted in the principal cities and provinces of the country by messengers from distant lands, and evangelists found in India itself ; and multitudes of the natives of India may share in the blessings which, with the help of God, it is seeking to dispense. We need fear no decline or failure in the work of witness-bearing ; for Christ Himself is no solitary or temporary star, however glorious. His countenance is as the sun shining in its strength ; while the ministers of the churches, from age to age, are but stars held in his right hand. He is the "Sun of Righteousness," destined to arise on India, and every other land, with healing in His wings. The light of the advent of His grace already begins to gild the tops of India's mountains ; and that light, we may be assured, will grow and spread and shine more and more unto the perfect day.

Taking these and other facts of a similar kind into consideration, I think it will be admitted that there is no need of a miraculous star to attract and lead the sincere inquirer in India to Christ. The providence of God, and the people of God, and the word of God, and the servants of God—all directed, we trust, by the Spirit of God—are here pointing to Him who is not only the Born-king of the Jews, but who

is "The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,"\* of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end. Hundreds and thousands, if they look around them, may see these great signs and wonders. They will have themselves to blame—and how sad and woful must their doom be!—if they fall short of finding Him who is ready to save unto the uttermost all them that come unto God through Him. To Him may they look; and by Him and in Him may they live for evermore.

It has often occurred to me, that as the arrival of the fulness of time for the advent of the Messiah and His manifestation to the nations of Western Asia—of which the Star of Bethlehem was a symbol—was marked by the establishment and consolidation of the Roman empire, so the arrival of the time for the full manifestation of Christ to the nations of Eastern Asia is marked by the establishment of the British power in India, and its concomitants and results, at which we have already glanced. Preparation for this epoch has long been advancing. The great heathen and infidel powers of the Eastern nations have been completely broken, and have either passed or are ready to pass away. The might of the Zoroastrianism

\* Isaiah ix. 6.

of Persia, which had been partially revived under the Sassanians—distinguished as violent persecutors of the Christian Church, but among whose subjects many noble martyrs to the truth were found \*—fell at Cadesia and Nehavand, under the arm of the Khalifs, in the middle of the seventh century, never more to rise. Hinduism, the most gigantic system of Gentile error ever developed on the face of the globe, was divided against itself before it was assailed with the Muhammadan sword ; and now, when it is grasped and encompassed by Christianity, its writhings and tossings are only those of an expiring monster. The Turkish and Saracenic powers, as has just been manifested to the world, exist only by the sufferance and help of Christendom, for the sake of which they have wisely changed what was deemed to be the essential spirit of their faith, religious intolerance. Buddhism was lately seen to be helpless in Burmah. The empire of China, with its triple creed, is shaking to its foundation. The British Power is predominant in India, and influential in the neighbouring countries, probably for the purpose, among others, of providing a fair field for truth in its conflicts with error and superstition. It has certainly given facilities for

\* See Author's Sermon entitled, *The Doctrine of Jehovah Addressed to the Persians*," pp. 22, 33.

evangelistic labour, greater than those enjoyed under the Roman empire, even when, in the pride of its boasted jurisprudence and order, that empire refrained from general persecution. It may yet prove a direct instrument of the extensive diffusion of light and knowledge throughout the length and breadth of many of the countries of the Asiatic continent.

The conflicts of truth with error and superstition in India have begun ; and they may be extended and multiplied, notwithstanding all the care of the advocates of truth to avoid offence. In the west of India, such conflicts have been, and may continue to be, for some time to come, peculiarly severe. The reasons are apparent, not only in the common resistance by long-established systems of error of their own overthrow, but in the peculiar position of the different portions and divisions of the population of this part of India. On the northern confines of our Presidency, we have the Rajput princes and nobles, glorying not only in their professed descent from the Solar and Lunar dynasties, and other ancient races of the Hindu sacred writings, but in their partially successful resistance to the force and persuasion of the the Muhammadan kings and emperors ; and consequently more attached to Hinduism than other parties whom they suppose to have

been less capable of upholding its interests. Around the sacred mountains of Abu, Gírnár, and Shatranjí, we have the devoted remnant of the Jainas, or Buddhist sectaries, who in olden times were predominant throughout the province of Sauráshtra ; while, associated with them, we have great numbers of other Hindu Baniás, or merchants, vying with them in affected tenderness to brute life, and in the degrading worship of priests and gurus. In Gujarát, we have the undecayed fruits of the last effort of Arabian proselytism in the Borahs, who believe in the revivification, in their Mullás, of 'Ali, whom they consider the greatest, or well-nigh the greatest, of inspired men. Elephanta and Salsette, with their excavated wonders, both Buddhist and Bráhmanical, throw a traditional sanctity, which is still felt by the superstitious mind around their neighbour island of Bombay. The province in which we are situated is that of the Maráthás, who, under the counsel and guidance of the Konkan Bráhmans, to whom the Peshwah and his associates belonged, not only rescued their own land from the grasp of the Muhammadans, but carried their victorious arms, under the dingy flag of Shiva, even to the banks of the Ganges and the coasts of Coromandel ; and both the Konkan Bráhmans and Maráthás, though no longer in power, still set



themselves forth as the heroes and defenders of fading and sinking Hinduism. The Pársís are the descendants of the Iranians who fled from Persia, on its invasion by the Khalifs, in the seventh century ; and they keep a blind, mechanical, and conventional hold of Zoroastrianism, long after their intelligence and enterprise have carried them far in advance of its peculiar institutes. The extended commerce of Bombay, now perhaps the largest city in India, though not in the most populous territory, has attracted to its port multitudes of all these classes of Orientals, with the exception of the Rajputs, who nevertheless have their representatives among us ; and their religious zeal, generating and cherishing mutual emulation, generally without proselytism, produces a more active opposition to Christianity, which, by Divine warrant and appointment, claims the field for itself, than is elsewhere to be witnessed in India. Though the divided character of the population may ultimately be found to contribute to anything but its strength in resisting Christianity, and though the earnestness now evinced in upholding error, may, through the grace of God, be soon exhibited in the support and propagation of truth, yet, in the commencement of Christian missions in this locality, the zeal of the votaries of error, who are quite unscrupulous

about the means which they adopt for the accomplishment of these purposes, makes a strong external resistance to the peaceful and quiet operations of these missions. As the arrival of the Magi in the holy city, seeking Him that was born King of the Jews, and who had come to worship Him, troubled Herod and all Jerusalem with him, so the desire of a few Pársí and other youths to seek and find the same King and Saviour troubles in our day multitudes of those who might really rejoice at that event, if, by the grace of God, they were prepared to understand its import. The conversion, in connexion with this mission, seventeen years ago, of two Pársí youths, now both ordained ministers of the Gospel of Christ, threw the whole of native society in this place into convulsions, and led not only to certain demonstrations of violence, but to petitioning and memorializing, both in India and England, of the most intolerant and persecuting character.\* Though matters are happily much improved at the present time, there are still not wanting many around us, who, Herod-like, are yet most anxious to crush the infant cause of Christianity in Bombay by almost any means short of that violence from which there is protection by law, even if there

\* See Author's Work, *The Pársí Religion*, pp. 83-93, 522-532.

were any inclination to resort to it. In this juncture, we neither form nor express any harsh or even unkind judgment, the result of personal provocation or suffering, but we speak from what has been seen and read and heard in this place, standing at the same time on the sacred ground of religious liberty, truth, and mercy, on which, by the help of God, we are determined to remain, cherishing sincere and ardent desires for the good of those who seek to dislodge us from its occupation. We have, at a late meeting, made a few peaceful remarks on the peculiar attempts at reclamation and misrepresentation to which we allude, and it is not necessary again to repeat them before the present audience.\* These attempts may be successful with the partially informed and the partially convinced—and with these our evangelistic dealings are generally in the first instance necessarily connected—but through the strength which God vouchsafes to His people, they will not, permanently at least, be successful with those who have been truly united to Christ by a living faith. We are by no means dismayed, or even discouraged, by what has occurred. The providence of God, we feel assured, will protect His

\* See Supplementary Paper on Religious Inquiry and Religious Confession, viewed in connexion with Methods of opposing Conversions to Christianity.

own cause in Bombay as in other parts of the world, and finally grant it a glorious triumph in the enlightenment, conversion, peace, joy, and sanctification of multitudes around us, to the praise of the grace and power of God. The existence of the native Church met together with us for the worship of God on this occasion, is, with all its purity and intelligence, a blessed pledge of this glorious result.

We leave the interesting and ingenuous youth, who, after many trials, many temptations, and many afflictions, has grace given him this day to seek admission into the visible Church of Christ by baptism, to declare for himself his attachment to the faith which he has lately embraced, and his dissatisfaction with that which he has lately abandoned. He does not ask us, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" but he emphatically says to us all, "I have found him that is born King of the Jews, and here do I worship him." On the renewed and continued sight of Him whom the star of Bethlehem symbolized, may he rejoice with exceeding great joy. In this joy may we, who are his brethren and sisters in Christ, sympathize with him. With this joy may we ourselves rejoice, on our own account, remembering each of us our own experience of the Lord's grace and loving-kindness. For the communication

of this joy to all the nations of the earth, may we pray and labour without ceasing ! To each of the natives of India within our hearing, may we say, with greater earnestness than the poet to his muse,—

“ See how from far upon the eastern road  
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet :  
O run, prevent \* them with thy humble ode,  
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet :  
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,  
And join your voice unto the angel-choir,  
From out His secret altar touch'd with hallowed fire.” †

AMEN.

## SUNG AT THE COMMENCEMENT AND CLOSE OF THE SERMON.

### I.

PSALM XXVII. 8-11, 14.

WHEN thou didst say, Seek ye my face,  
Then unto thee reply  
Thus did my heart, Above all things  
Thy face, Lord, seek will I.

O God of my salvation,  
Leave me not nor forsake :  
Though me my parents both should leave,  
The Lord will me up take.

\* Get before.

† Milton, On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.

O Lord, instruct me in the way,  
To me a leader be  
In a plain path, because of those  
That hatred bear to me.

Wait on the Lord, and be thou strong,  
And he shall strength afford  
Unto thine heart ; yea, do thou wait,  
I say, upon the Lord.

## II.

## PARAPHRASE XVIII. 3, 7.

THE beam that shines from Sion hill  
Shall lighten every land ;  
The King who reigns in Salem's towers  
Shall all the world command.

Come, then, O house of Jacob ! come  
To worship at His shrine ;  
And, walking in the light of God,  
With holy beauties shine.



# BAPTISMAL SERVICE

BY THE REV. ADAM WHITE,

(FOLLOWING THE PRECEDING DISCOURSE,)

INCLUDING

THE PERSONAL STATEMENT OF BEHRAMJI KERSASJI.

THE Church of God has always taken a most solemn view of the dreadful condition of those remaining out of the covenant of His grace, unbelievers in Jesus Christ. She holds most distinctly, that out of Christ no man can be saved from sin or rescued from the wrath to come. On this point there is a quarrel from time immemorial between her and the world. While the world has accused her of a narrow and misanthropic exclusiveness, she has felt bound to accuse the world of ungodly liberality. From her position on this point, she can never retreat, without betraying the sacred cause of truth and righteousness committed to her by God, and sacrificing His friendship to that of the world. Her doctrine, which she has learned from her great Head, is this: that the world, ever since the fall of our race, has transferred its allegiance from God to Satan. In her view, the whole world is the domain of Satan. The frightful condition of the human



race has oftentimes, indeed, a gilded covering, but in reality all human affairs are in alliance with the power of darkness. The disposition of men's hearts, their everyday life, their social institutions, their systems of religion—all worldly things—are alienated from God. The true Christian, looking around him, beholds the kingdom of the Wicked One, and feels that by the exceeding mercy of God he has himself been rescued from it. The humble and solemn view a man takes, after truly knowing the grace of God in Christ, and after tasting the power of eternal things, is, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."\* It is easy to see, then, with what joy the Church sees any one, formerly of the world, breaking through every restraint and coming to the Lord. In that sight, she beholds a soul coming out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

In order to bring this great truth plainly before the minds of all, whether within or without the Church, it has been customary to put solemn questions to persons desiring admission by baptism into the number of God's professing people. With this view, we now put to this candidate for baptism, the following questions:—

1. Do you renounce the religion of Zoroaster, and do you embrace the religion of Jesus Christ?

*Ans.* I do.

2. Do you solemnly declare that you have no faith in the Zend-Avastá or other sacred Zoroastrian books, as guides in

\* 1 John v. 19.

religion ; and do you believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, taking them for your only rule of faith and practice ?

*Ans.* I do.

3. Do you renounce all belief in two independent beings, one good and the other evil ; and do you believe that there is but one God, infinitely good and holy, and that all evil beings are His *creatures*, fallen from their original holy condition ?

*Ans.* I do.

4. Do you renounce all worship of angels, and of the elements and works of nature, or, as men vainly talk, the worship of God through them ; and do you take for your God, the one living and true God, in the revealed three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ?

*Ans.* I do.

5. Do you not reject the ungodly opinion, that all religions are true ; and do you believe that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ ?

*Ans.* I do.

6. Do you renounce all confidence in your own works before God, as a means of acceptance with Him ; and do you confess that you are an undone sinner, unable to save yourself ; and do you come to Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Saviour, as the only way to the Father ?

*Ans.* I do.

7. Do you, by the Spirit of God helping you, renounce yourself, your own will, desires, wisdom, and pleasures ; and do you place yourself as an humble disciple at the feet of Jesus Christ ?

*Ans.* I do.

8. Do you renounce the devil and all his works, all the pomps, vanities, and follies of the world, and all the lusts of the flesh ? and do you in the sight of God and these witnesses promise, that, by the grace of God assisting you, you will set your heart on God and on His kingdom, that you will keep His commandments, that you will study His Word, that

you will give yourself to prayer and every holy exercise, and that you will seek to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things, by a sober, righteous, and godly life ?

*Ans.* I do.

9. Do you promise to own the blessed name of Jesus Christ before men, without being ashamed of Him ; and do you engage solemnly, through His own grace, as His good soldier, to maintain His cause, notwithstanding whatever troubles or persecutions may arise ?

*Ans.* I do.

10. Have you any statement to make for the satisfaction of the Church, and for explanation to those who are present ?

*Ans.* I have.

**PERSONAL STATEMENT read by Behrámjí Kersdsjî.\***

I feel that I am a great sinner, deserving the curse of God. When I considered my present condition and saw that I am a sinner against God, against His attributes, yea, against His love towards me ; when I was convinced of this undeniable doctrine, " that all men and women, descending from Adam, in an ordinary way, have sinned, and *come short of the glory of God ;*" when I knew that sin is opposition to, and transgression of, the law of God, and that God is the wisest and the best and the highest Being, I trembled, because the sins which I have committed are countless, and cannot be pardoned for my own righteousness, and form a heavy burden which cannot be removed by my own efforts. When I found that sin is the defilement of my soul, and thought that every sin is from Satan, the enemy of God, and that I myself, also, am an enemy of God, at whose footstool I am not worthy to stand ; and when I learnt that sin is an abomination to God, it was but natural that the question should arise in my mind, " What must I do to be saved ?"

God, I thought, said, " Up, go, and do." I was guilty, however, of further transgression by breaking His command-

\* In drawing up this statement, Behrámjí had in his eye six questions proposed to him in writing by Dr. Wilson.

wants, and by being careless of myself, nay, of that Omnipotent Being, the Ruler, the Governor, and the Preserver of the whole universe. Oh! let me speak in the words of David, "I am shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Is it not, then, I reasoned, a most fearful thing for me to be an offender against God? Have I not yielded myself up to the power of Satan? Have I not transgressed against God, falling into the snare of Satan by his delusion and enticements? Woe to me, then, that I have become an enemy of God; woe to me, I say, if I still remain in the same deplorable condition. Woe to me, if I be still increasing in my sins without being weary of them; yea, woe to me, if I be not reconciled to God.

Then, I more anxiously inquired after the truth; but I found my own religion quite unsuitable, and incapable to answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?"—simple in words, yet comprehensive in sense. The more I knew of the poor doctrines of Zoroaster, and the fabrications of Mobeds and Dasturs, the more I was led to forsake my own religion wholly for the true one. I found that repentance, charity, giving alms, cannot give salvation or the remission of sins. I found that the offering of incense and frankincense to the fires of Behram, Dadgan, and Aderan; the presenting of flowers and sugar to the seas and rivers; the repeating of Niaishia, Yasta, Ashem-Vohus, and Yatha-ahuvairios, in a language unknown to us all, to Amsháspanda, Izada, hills, mountains, trees, and other real and imaginary creatures; the sipping, drinking, and sprinkling of Nirang, or the water of the cow; the wearing of a shirt as a coat of mail, and a cap of two folds as a helmet, to protect me from the devil; and the twisting of a kustí or string round my body, to tie me to the doctrines and practices of Zoroaster, whose days I believe are long gone by; and many other rites and ceremonies, which it would be beneath the gravity of this assembly for me to mention, were only adding to my sins.

Then, Where can I get salvation? was a question most powerfully struggling in my mind. At this time an actual

battle was going on in myself between Satan and the Divine Spirit. Sometimes it led me to natural religion, sometimes to Deism, sometimes to Parsiism, and again, and principally, to Christianity. Christianity—which glorifies God, which shows the loving-kindness of God towards men, His mercy, truth, and all His perfections—does not stop here, but gives men the thing most precious, even SALVATION. It informs us that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John iii. 16. It says, “There is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we can be saved, but only that of Jesus Christ.”—Acts iv. 12. Salvation appertains unto the Lord alone; and by believing in Him only, I can be saved. So I, leaving my offerings to the gods, went to that great sacrifice, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Oh, let me hold Him fast and embrace Him with all love, relying on Him, and being weary of sin; because “he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.”—Isa. liii. 5. He was despised and rejected for us, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners. But on what ground do I rest my confidence on the Lord Jesus Christ? How do I know that Christ will receive me, and will open the gates of mercy for me? What will enable me to hold Him fast at all hazards, losing all my worldly prospects and pleasures? In reply to these questions, let me only mention a few passages from the Word of God which have produced this conviction.

“Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

“Fear thou not, nor be ashamed,  
 All thy sorrow soon shall end;  
 I, who heaven and earth have framed,  
 Am thy Husband and thy Friend:

I, the High and Holy One,  
Israel's God by all adored,  
As thy Saviour will be known,  
Thy Redeemer and thy God.  
Though afflicted, tempest-tossed,  
Comfortless a while thou art,  
Do not think thou canst be lost,—  
Thou art graven on my heart :  
All thy wastes I will repair,  
Thou shalt be rebuilt anew,  
And in thee it shall appear  
What a God of Love can do.—Isa. liv. 5-11.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."—Matt. xi. 19.

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37.

"Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."—Matt. xix. 29.

"Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—Matt. vii. 7.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 34.

These words are of Him who can never lie. Having this assurance, I humbly ask God to give me strength to act according to them.

Now, after having rested my confidence on the Lord Jesus Christ, I humbly ask, Have I experienced the regeneration of the Holy Spirit ? In my former condition, I was a sinner and indifferent to my sins, a child of the devil, a foe of the chosen people of God. In my present condition, I cannot presume to say that I am not a sinner ; but now, I see and feel my guilt and depravity. I fear God. I try my best to love His commandments, to observe His law, and to do good to my brethren.

Before, I was careless in prayer ; but now, I know that prayer is for me a defensive instrument, and it is an offensive one also against Satan. I know that prayer is a true help in the days of affliction and trial. I have experienced also, that the gracious God has heard my prayers in many respects. I have repented and repent of my sins ; and heartily I have become, and am sorry for having offended God. Before, I was very careless about what might result out of my transgressions against God ; now, I desire a holy forgiveness ; now, I see myself in great need of the pardon of my sins. Before, I was wandering in darkness as a lost sheep without a shepherd ; now, I have found the good Shepherd in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I take Him as my precious and beloved Saviour. Before, I was not at peace with God ; now, I look to Him who sitteth on the right hand of God, as my peacemaker and peace giver. Now, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, I know many of the things pertaining to salvation ; and I have undergone many changes. In a word, I trust I have been " born again."

But all does not end in this. Still I desire one thing, and that is the sanctification of my soul. What I desire is, that my heart may be sanctified, and that it may increase in its purification day by day by the Holy Spirit, so that I may be ready to stand with the assembled people of God around His throne. This wretched and sinful heart cannot be purified by myself, or be sanctified by the cleansing with water. May the Supreme Being purge it with hyssop, and cleanse it with the water of His Holy Spirit, so that it may be whiter than snow, and purer than the water itself.

Now, my brethren, allow me to speak a few words to my fellow-countrymen. Let me express, briefly, the desires of my heart in reference to their conversion and instruction.

I urge you, my countrymen, to go to your respective closets, and to consider your sins and your transgressions against God during your past life. What will you find ? Nothing, perhaps, the first time. You may be quite perplexed ; and for a long time many wandering and struggling feelings may confuse you. When you find and feel that your sins are count-

less, will you not go to seek the way of salvation? Will you not seek a Saviour and ask the way to Zion? Will you not say, What enmity against God have I indulged? I beseech you to seek after the truth, and having found it out, to exclaim, in the words of Philip, I have found the Messiah; and, moreover, I have found the pearl of great price.

I turn to you, my Pársí friends, and urge you to take the Bible into your hands, and to compare it with the Vandidad or other poor writings ascribed to Zoroaster. Do not rely on your Mobeds and Dasturs, who are more ignorant than yourselves; for by your own judgment you have to stand or fall before God. And if you are impartial, Christianity will shine forth in glory, and you will openly declare that you have found the religion which you are in need of.

O my brethren, be prepared for that day when the godly and ungodly, the rich and poor, will meet together, and when the earth and heavens shall shake! Oh may you have a happy resurrection and an everlasting life! May you not fear death nor the events following it, which, to the unprepared, are more fearful than death itself! Oh may the gracious God give all of you the second birth. May the impenetrable veil of heathenism be torn from off you, and the mysteries of heaven be opened unto you! May all of you go to Christ, seeking Him as your precious Saviour, and asking from Him the water of eternal life.

Lastly, I desire, my brethren, that the day of the happy visitation of India may speedily and graciously come; and may every Pársí, every Hindu, yea, every nation, boldly confess the name of the Lord Jesus before men. I want to speak a very few words to those who are already convinced of the truth of Christianity, but do not boldly come forward to confess the truth they have discovered. Why do you not come out, my friends? Only because you fear the world. But "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—Matt. x. 28. You say, you are Christians in heart; and so you shall be saved; but always bear in mind the words of our



blessed Saviour, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." My good friends, be at once decided, that you may have also a happy resurrection. In the words of the expositor of the Pársí and Hindu faiths near you, (Dr. W.,) the true friend of you all, and the promoter of the enlightenment of the sons of India, I speak: "There is such an hour as death, and such a transaction as judgment; and it becomes you to think of your preparation to encounter their solemnities, and to meet your doom. I could not resist this opportunity of giving you one word of affectionate warning, of inviting you to look to Him who now says to you, 'Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you; I will make known my words unto you;' but who may afterwards address to you the sentence of condemnation for mercies despised, and privileges abused, and deliverance rejected, and declare to you the loss, the eternal loss of your own souls."

While I am baptized with water in the name of the Father, who sent His Son to save me, and of the Son, who gave His life as my ransom, and of the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies me, may I be baptized anew with the Holy Ghost as with purifying fire. May I be upheld in the profession and practice of the truth through life; and at death may I be enabled to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen and Amen.

BEHRAMJI KERSASJI.

31st August 1856.

#### ADDRESS BEFORE BAPTISM.

You have now made a solemn statement, and a good confession before many witnesses. I trust you

feel at this moment that sorrow for sin, and that comfort in Christ which you have now expressed. The ordinance of baptism is one which may be the means of much grace to the soul that rightly and worthily comes to it. In one view, it is a confession of Christ's name before men ; in another, it is a holy transaction between the soul and Christ. In it the soul looks up to Christ, and in it Christ meets the soul that waiteth for Him. Let your heart at this time look to the Lord of the ordinance, and He will let you feel now, and in your future life, what a blessing humble faith can draw out of His fulness in the use of baptism. In coming to Christianity, you come not to the adoption of a new set of ceremonies, or of a new form of worship, but to *Christ*. You the sinner, come to the Saviour ; you the weary and heavy laden, come to Him who giveth rest. Filthy through sin, I trust you have already repaired to the fountain of Christ's blood, righteousness, and Spirit, and that there you have got the true cleansing. Not through baptism, but through Christ and His grace received by faith, is the defiled soul purified. Yet, in the holy ordinance of baptism, all this is shown forth in a most sweet and attractive and heart-stirring way. He that comes to this water confesses his filth, and He who ordained its application in His name proclaims His readiness to cleanse all that filth away. The outward application of water to the body corresponds strikingly with the spiritual promise, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your

filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you."\*

Let your heart, then, realize the gracious Saviour in this ordinance, let your soul enter into the spiritual truths which baptism puts before you, and you will find it to be no empty ceremony, but a means of salvation, by enabling you to apprehend Christ, and rest on Him as your Saviour. The benefit which a sinner condemned in his conscience before the judgment-seat of a holy God, and accused in his conscience of being in love with sin, derives from Jesus Christ when he repents and believes in His name, consists in *his conscience being cleansed*. Christ has answered for the sins of the believer, so that he can look up now with a purged conscience toward God; and Christ's Spirit has so purified his heart, that though he still feels much sin to dwell within him, he has a conscience void of offence toward God, inasmuch as he can say, "Lord, thou knowest I do not willingly sin; I hate every false and wicked way." If with this good conscience any one comes to baptism, and therein looks up to God, the ordinance will greatly contribute to his comfort and salvation. In this view the Word of God represents it. "Baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but *the answer of a good conscience toward God*, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."† Let this now, then, be the exercise of your soul; in your baptism

\* Ezek. xxxv. 25.

† 1 Pet. iii. 21.

look up to a reconciled God, with your eye resting on Jesus Christ, who died for you and rose again ; and with all your heart renounce your past life, and all sin that still dwells in you. Spiritually at this moment, in your inmost soul, let your former man be buried as it were with Christ in His sepulchre, and again spiritually rise you with Him to newness of life. Thus will you find that baptism, in itself of no virtue, is fraught with a heavenly significance ; and, through the grace of the Holy Spirit and the presence of Christ, that it is one of the wells of salvation.

*(After a short Prayer.)*

Behrármjí Kersásjí, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*(After a short Prayer.)*

#### ADDRESS AFTER BAPTISM.

I have now to congratulate you, dear friend, for myself and in the name of the Church of Christ, that you have clean escaped from them who live in error. You have now, by this solemn act, finally snapped the ties which bound you to your old connexions in the world. After many a struggle, many a tear, many an outward conflict, and many an inward fear, you have at length, through the mercy of God, been delivered. You may take up now the language of David, " My soul is escaped as a bird out of the

snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and I am delivered."\*

You have now publicly declared your entrance on a new life. I say your *entrance*, for baptism is the outward *initiation* merely into the Divine life. Many suppose that baptism is the consummation of Christianity; but it is as the *beginning*, and not the *ending*. On what, then, have you entered? On a life of faith and obedience; on a course of keeping the commandments of God, and of testifying for the name of Christ Jesus your Lord. You have a race set before you, you have a great battle to fight throughout the course of the new life you have espoused. The world with its allurements and deceits, Satan with his temptations and wiles, your own heart with all its plagues and sinful tendencies,—these are the enemies you have to contend with. This day you have promised to wage war with them, in the Lord's name and strength, until death. Alas! one may say, when there is such a fight, and when such are the enemies, how could Christ call His yoke easy and His burden light? Now, dear friend, it would not be so, if the Lord, who laid on the burden, did not supply the strength. Christ's servants, *through His power resting on them*, find His service sweet and easy. Therefore, do not fear for the future so long as you keep near to Christ. When Satan tempts, and the world entices, and the evil heart seeks to overmaster the Spirit of God, then look to Christ for aid and succour. Be not

\* Ps. cxxxv. 7.

dismayed through ridicule or suffering. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."\* When you feel that you are too weak for the difficulties of your life with God, remember the promise, "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."† Whatever befalls the true Christian, he is still triumphant. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."‡ If you have an arduous race before you, let the disposition necessary for this holy ordinance of baptism be the disposition of your whole life; always look to Jesus, and you will run it with ease. "Let us," says the apostle, "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, *looking unto Jesus*, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."§

I would exhort you, moreover, to take, as it were,

\* 1 Pet. iv. 16, 14.

† Rom. viii. 35, 37.

‡ Isa. xl. 29.

§ Heb. xii. 1-3.

a special note of the day of your baptism. In your private exercises of this day, seek to realize and confirm this baptismal covenant, and take the Lord for your God. In the storms and troubles of your future life, it will be very comforting to you to look back on the transactions between you and the God of your baptism. It will often quiet your troubled spirit, and raise up your drooping heart to call on the name of your covenant God.

The Lord now sends you from this ordinance on your way as a pilgrim, with these words:—"Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;" and again, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."\* Keep now that which has been committed to your trust. Contend earnestly for the Gospel. Live not unto yourself, but unto Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."†

#### ADDRESS TO THOSE PRESENT.

Let me address a few words to the different classes now present; first to the heathen. You have seen a solemn sight. It ought to lead you to inquiry. It ought to lead you to long for something better than you possess. You ought to study the

\* 2 Tim. ii. 1, 3.

† Rev. iii. 5.

Bible, and entreat the merciful God to open your eyes, and turn you from darkness unto light. I entreat you, put not away from you what you have heard and seen ; rather let it sink down deeply into your minds. I am afraid that some here will not understand wherefore all this has taken place, and that they have looked with an evil eye on these sacred transactions. They look on the missionaries as cruelly bent on selfish purposes, when they seek to turn men to the Lord. They imagine that our feeling at present is that of victory over them, and see us, in this baptism, only enjoying our triumph. I can assure them, that every such feeling we wish most heartily to expel from our minds ; and that Jesus Christ our Lord would reject as vile all that has now been done, if His omniscient eye saw that it sprung from this unholy principle. Brethren, we desire not to cause grief, but to glorify God and save the souls of men. If in any way we could fulfil our heavenly errand, *without giving you pain*, most gladly would we take that way. Brethren, our heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved. O that you would repent and believe the Gospel ! There is one class of heathens to whom I would speak a word or two : those, I mean, who are convinced of the truth of Christianity, but who fight against their convictions, struggling to keep them down, lest they should have to endure shame and suffering in confessing Christ before men. There are many such ; perhaps many such present. You have got this day a quickening example, and



you ought to follow it. God's will is, that one should get courage through the example of another. Do not therefore stand doubting. Believe in your hearts and confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved. Cease to fight with truth, for at present you have truth for your enemy. At every point, if you have truth for your enemy, you will find it meeting and withstanding you. On this subject Jesus Christ says: "When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art in the way*, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him, lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last farthing."\* You at present have truth (so far known but not yielded to) for your adversary; it and you have not yet come before the Divine Judge, but you are on the way together to His tribunal. Once before Him at death, with truth as your enemy, and your cause is lost, for He is the God of truth. What sound advice, then, does Christ give when He says, as it were, Let not the cause come before His tribunal at all; *whilst thou art in the way*, give diligence to make up the quarrel. Now, then, you and truth are in the way to that dread judgment-seat; *while you are in the way, ere yet the cause reaches the Judge*, deliver yourselves from the grasp of truth, by yielding to its holy commands, and being reconciled to it. Obey its voice, and it will cease to be your

\* Luke xii. 51.

enemy. And do it without loss of time—*give diligence to do it*. For another day and you may die; the case will be tried, truth will stand as the accuser, and the judge deciding against you will condemn you to eternal imprisonment. Oh, save your souls by yielding to the righteous dictates of truth!

One word to professing Christians. These have been baptized, some of them in infancy, some of them in riper years. Many such, though baptized, may yet be unconverted, for baptism works no change of heart. If such are present, what a terrible contradiction do they present! *Baptized, but unregenerated!* They have the mark of salvation, while they are under condemnation. God's holy stamp is on their body, while Satan's image is in their soul. They have broken the covenant of God. They were taken bound by baptism to be the Lord's; they have broken the obligation. Let them repent and turn to that God whose property they rightfully are, and whose baptismal sign will testify against them at the last day, unless they are found spiritually corresponding with it. Let them remove the awful discrepancy (though the *very* common one) of a man stamped with the seal of God in baptism, and yet living in unconversion, devoted to the service of the world. Many men, when first reconciled to God in conversion, are first reconciled to their own condition as baptized persons. And lastly, let the people of God—His outwardly by baptism, and inwardly by regeneration,—let them now renew their bap-

tismal obligations. All that has been laid on the youth now baptized—all that renunciation of the religion of the world, of the devil and of his works, of worldly pomps and vanities; all that solemn promising to be wholly for the Lord Jesus, to obey His voice, to submit to His wisdom, and to set the heart on heavenly things;—all this has been laid on us, and laid on us by our baptism, in the same way as on him. What manner of persons ought the baptized to be in all holy conversation and godliness!

What man would have pronounced impossible, that God has accomplished before our eyes to-day. Let us rejoice with Christ in finding the lost sheep; for assuredly He calls us to rejoice with Him. The Lord is seeing of the travail of His soul, and is being satisfied; what a joy has He now, if His eye sees, in these sacred transactions, what we humbly hope it does! Let us thank God, and take courage. May this our present work be a sign of the day coming when *many* of the heathen shall say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." To God be glory now and for ever, Amen.

Psalm lxxii. 17-19, was then sung, and the blessing was pronounced.

# RELIGIOUS INQUIRY AND RELIGIOUS CONFESSION,

VIEWED IN CONNEXION WITH

## METHODS OF OPPOSING CONVERSIONS TO CHRISTIANITY.\*

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IN the good providence of God, we are spared again to resume our labours in an important department of our missionary enterprise in this great city. I have much satisfaction in seeing so many of the youth of Bombay now before me; and I trust that, with the blessing of God, our intercommunion with one another on these occasions may not be uninter-

\* This brief article consists of extracts from Dr. Wilson's Introductory Discourse on resuming his Weekly Lecture, on the 6th August 1856. "The following subjects, in comparison of the Shástras and the Bible," it was intimated in the advertisement published on the occasion, "remain to be discussed:—General Views of Sin. Method and Means of Salvation. Origin of the Legends of the Hindu Avatáras, Infrahuman and Human: and the Descriptions of them, contrasted with the Revelation of the True Incarnation, and the Scripture Doctrine of Atonement and Sacrifice. Notions of Faith. The Physical Births of the Hindus, contrasted with Spiritual Regeneration. The Sacraments and Rites of the Hindus, as far as not already treated of under 'Idolatry.' The Characters approved by Hinduism and Christianity. National Influence of Hinduism and Christianity. Prospects of Hinduism and Christianity, embracing the Progress of the Kali Yuga, and the Development of the Glory of the Latter Days. The Future State and Final Destiny of Man. The bearing on Muhammadanism and Páralism of the matters discussed will also be pointed out as the Lectures proceed.—Students of all the Seminaries in Bombay, and the friends of native enlightenment in general, are invited to attend."

esting and unedifying. The part of our course of Lectures, in comparison of the Shástras and the Bible, at which we have arrived, is one of peculiar importance. It has to do with the grandest questions connected with our judicial and moral relations to God, and our destiny in time and eternity, with which we can be connected. We have all, to a greater or less extent, a consciousness of sin and guilt and depravity; and the inquiry, How has this consciousness of existing and apprehended evil been dealt with by those who, in past ages, have professed to be the religious guides of the human family, and how ought it to be dealt with by ourselves? is urged upon us both by natural curiosity and our moral intuitions and instincts. "What must I do to be saved?" is the solemn question which appropriately follows our conviction of guilt and demerit in the sight of a holy God; and the responses which have been given to it by ancient inquirers, or by the authorized expounders of the ways of God,—by the Hindu Rishi, the Gentile sage, the Hebrew prophet, and the Lord from heaven,—cannot be compared together in a spirit of candour and docility without advantage, and, it may be, in the case of some, without making them "wise unto salvation." "God manifest in the flesh" is to the Christian the "great mystery of godliness;" and the alleged Avatáras, or descents and incorporations of the Hindu gods, are to the Hindus objects of admiration and delight. What is the real character of these conceptions of incarnations of deity? how have they originated?

and are they in any degree connected with the glory of God and the good of men? Surely no intelligent native of India should shrink from these interrogatories. The rite of sacrifice is the oldest of religion after the fall, and has been prevalent from the earliest times in all the nations of the earth. The solution of its import is demanded by the spirit of history, as well as by the necessity of a reasonable acknowledgment and service of God. Has there been a real atonement and propitiation, of which it was originally the type and index? How ought the faith and affection of man to be exercised in reference to that atonement, and how do its blessings become available to man? No educated person can be held guiltless who would shrink from these inquiries. But deliverance is needed by us from the pollution and power of sin, as well as from its punishment. Is our purification to follow the eighty-four lakhs of births of the Hindus in vegetable, brutal, or human forms, or the one regeneration and sanctification in the present life by the Word and Spirit of the living God? Is this interesting question to be answered in the words of indifference and unconcern? How are the conduct, conversation, and condition of man dealt with by the prevalent religious systems, and what are the means of his improvement and elevation which these religions afford? What are the characters approved of by Hinduism and Christianity? How is the world in general to be affected by Hinduism and Christianity, and, if you will, by Zoroastrianism and Muham-

madanism, in its latter days? What are to be the Future State and Final Destiny of Man? These, too, are questions suggested alike by curiosity and conscience.

The great objects of our English lectures are the excitement and satisfaction of religious inquiry. And this they accomplish in various ways, both directly and indirectly. It is the existence of the educational institutions of Bombay, both public and private, which renders them practicable. These educational institutions are to them auxiliary and supplementary, while to these institutions they, in their turn, are auxiliary and supplementary.

A considerable degree of religious inquiry has been excited in at least one division of the native community around us, since we last met together on an occasion similar to the present. With this inquiry our lectures, we trust, will be in a good degree congenial. Our own connexion with that inquiry has been definitely explained in a statement pretty widely circulated in this locality.\* The movement in native society of which it has been the occasion, is well worthy of attention and review. The removal of errors and misrepresentations respecting it is a special duty for us to effect, if we seek to reap from it all the fruit which it encourages us to expect. This, we are persuaded, can be done without the utterance of a single expression offensive, on just grounds, to any portion of the varied community by which we are surrounded.

\* See Introduction.

The desire entertained by a number of young Pársí and other students to embrace Christianity, and the steps which they took to implement that desire, were certainly not so much the occasion of wonderment and indignation, as the conversion of two youths of that enterprising tribe about seventeen years ago. The present case has afforded us manifest proofs of the growth of impressions favourable to religious liberty and religious reformation, in the Bombay community. The Hindus and Muhammaddans—though doubtless individuals of them, principally belonging to the schools of superstition and bigotry now happily declining in extent and influence, have taken the alarm at the advancement of the Christian cause—have, as a body, rather extended to us than withheld their sympathy; but this from their desire to see that proselytism proceed among their neighbours which they have often experienced among themselves. The sympathies of many of the better educated of the Hindu youth have appeared to be wholly on our side. Even among the Pársís, there have not been wanting individuals who have earnestly wished the youth to hold fast by their Christian profession. Few demonstrations of external violence have been made, even by the lowest of the Zoroastrians. Our opponents, in general, have kept within legal bounds in the exertions which they have made to thwart the wishes of the students. The relatives of the inquirers have professed to make a show (it is not yet known to be anything more) of granting them liberty of conscience. How much



all this is in advance of the state of matters seventeen years ago, when the Pársí community was thrown into a state of absolute convulsion by the defection from Zoroastrianism which had occurred, when the lives both of converts and teachers were really endangered, and when a petition, framed in the very spirit of intolerance and persecution, was addressed to Government by Pársís, Muhammadans, and Hindus, banded together against the truth and religious liberty, it is unnecessary to declare.

Yet the proceedings of many of the Pársís in the present case have, in many respects, been far from being of a commendable character. To some of their special features, as they bear on religious inquiry, and religious conviction, and religious liberty, let me briefly direct your attention, with the view of doing something to clear the field of religious discussion in this place from the obstacles to fair vision and fair action, on the part of native youths, which have been raised up by the ignorant or wilful opponents of improvement and progress. It is desirable that religious inquirers should be aware of the peculiar kinds of opposition which they may be called to encounter in the native community.

1. The primary object of most of the Pársí visitors of the young men at the mission-house, was to prevent their embracement of Christianity, by whatever means it could be accomplished, and with the violation, to the utmost extent, of religious consistency. The devout and superstitious Zoroastrian, the sober Deist, the religious inquirer, and the arro-

gant scoffer, each in his turn attempted to reclaim them from Christianity ; and each sympathized with the endeavour made by his neighbour in this matter, even with the sacrifice of his own principles, whatever they might be. The Deist wished success to the Zoroastrian, though the issue might be the disownment of the Creator of heaven and earth, and the worship henceforth of lords many and gods many. The Zoroastrian wished success to the Deist, though the *Zendávastá* should no longer be acknowledged. The professed inquirer wished a pause in the prosecution of research, though there should be confirmation in errors long ago rejected. The scoffer addressed himself only to the abuse of what is lovely and of good report, wishing the follies and absurdities, on which he had so long operated, to gain the victory. The unity which was thus apparent had no respect to truth, the love of which ought to be paramount in every religious movement. Though there was this agreement in opposing Christianity, there was great diversity in the methods of its assault.

2. A superstitious Zoroastrian would come forward and declare that the youth were bewildered solely, or mainly, by magic. *Tu—taro (mutro—mutra S.) nathí léto*, he would say, *téthé táré máthé Sétán bhaméch*, (You have not taken the [bovis ur]ina, and therefore Satan is confusing your head !) *Yathá ahavairyó bhan, Sétan dur tháyé*, (Repeat the *yathá Ahu vairyó*,\* that Satan may be driven away !) *A'*

⌊ \* The original Zend of this the most sacred *manthra* (*mantra S.*) and the

*rumál sungo ; ané tamárun máthun thékané padsé,* (Smell this handkerchief [on which Nirang had been sprinkled] and you will come to your senses.) Both Pársí and Hindu "magicians" were actually introduced, at the same time, into the mission-compound, to try the effect of their cantrips on both the catechumens and their instructors. How little all this was likely to prove effectual with even partially educated students, I need not stop to say.

3. Great surprise was expressed that the young men should, on any occasion, engage in devotion in an intelligible language, such as English. *Faringt-mán bhanech !* was the exclamation of a party on hearing the sounds of devotion in that tongue. The Pársís are so much accustomed to consider the language of the Avastá as that of God himself, that they are astonished that supplication should ever be made through any other medium. Intelligibility in prayer is not with them in the least a desideratum. There is not one man among a thousand of them who has the least idea of the meaning of the words in Zend, which he is taught to repeat in his religious exercises from his earliest years. Of the impiety of professing to address the Divinity with the lips while the heart is far from Him, supposing for a mo-

supposed word creative of the universe, of the Pársís, is given in Dr. Wilson's work. *The Pársí Religion*, pp. 444, 445. It is thus translated by Burnouf, (*Yaçna*, p. 47,)—"Qualiter Domini cupido, (id est) qualiter Ahuramazdæ desiderium, O Djuti, præcipue mihi dic actum purum quoque; Ráthvi (sic loquitur). Responsum facit Djuti: Ita lex: puritate quacumque, præcipue, o pure animo, præceptum dico; id est, omnem actum purum ita lex (jubet) facere ut Ahuramazdæ placeat." It is a dialogue between the officiating priests, the Juti, and the Ráthvi.

ment that He is actually recognised by them in worship, they have not, generally speaking, the slightest apprehension. The first principle of religion,—“God is a spirit, and they, that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth,” they have yet to learn and reduce to practice. Hence their frequent salutations of men, and occasional attempts at bargain-making in the midst of their prayers on the shores of Backbay.\*

4. “You are not thoroughly acquainted with Zoroastrianism and the *Zendávastá*, and you have no warrant to forsake them,” was language with which the youths were constantly assailed. On this matter I would remark, that a religious system may be seen, and felt, and judged to be evil, even though many, or even most, of the minutiae of its rites and ceremonies, and the arcana of its books, should be altogether unknown. It is sufficient that its principal doctrines and practices should be understood. And what these are in the case of Zoroastrianism, every young man capable of the slightest reflection can be at no loss to discover. Such questions as the following must continually occur to him:—Is *Hor-mazd*, the highest object of *Pársí* worship, in conception and description, a derivative and created, or self-existent and independent being? Why is *Zarvána-Akarana* placed before him, as Time-without-bounds; and why, if *Zarvána* is merely Eternity, as some allege, is he worshipped and has personal

\* *E! é!* [clapping the hands] *máchalínun sun léé?* Ho! ho! what will he take for the fish [addressed to a passing boatman].

acts and works attributed to him, as if he were a personal being? \* Why is Hormazd, the "author of good," represented as, in existence, creation, providence, and dominion, the fellow of Ahriman, the "author of evil," existing and working independently of him, and with whom he is now disputing the sovereignty of the universe? Why is Hormazd classed among the seven Amsháspands, or archangels, of whom he is said to be the first? Why are Amsháspands and Izads, archangels and angels, set forth, not as subservient to providence, but supercessive of providence, and presiding over the different departments of nature; and why, if they are creatures, should Divine worship, and the honour and glory of God, be constantly attributed to them? Why should the elements and their aggregates be deified, and fire and flame viewed either as "the spirit" or "Son of God," as they are represented in the *Avastá*? Are not the institutes and ceremonies of Zoroastrianism alike unreasonable and inconsistent with their professed origin and objects? The serious inquirer can find nothing in the system satisfying to his moral and spiritual wants. He must see that it excludes him from the living fountain of truth, at which alone the desires of his soul can be satisfied. He sees in it no provision for the pardon of his sin, no provision for the renewal and sanctification of his soul—no provision for his enjoyment of happiness on earth, and no provision for his preparation for heaven. The more he knows of Zoroastrianism as

\* See Author's work, *The Parsé Religion*, chap. ii.

it actually is, the more unsatisfactory does it appear to his soul. To use a familiar illustration, he sees that he can pronounce judgment on a joint of tainted mutton, without being compelled to devour it in its totality.

5. On the part of many, the attempt was made to disguise the real character of Zoroastrianism, so as to represent it as undeserving of the charges which are usually brought against it. "It is a vast deal better," it was said, "than it is usually believed to be. Its sacred books have been wholly misinterpreted by the priests; and if they were rightly translated, they would be found to be free of all absurdities, and to be consistent with the highest philosophy." Sufficient allowance was made, in reply, for the errors of the priests; but it was rightly alleged that the investigations of the Zend writings by European Orientalists, though they have brought many facts, curious and interesting in an antiquarian point of view, to notice, have done nothing to enhance the *Avastá* as a rule of faith and practice in the eyes of the intelligent and devout. The Rationalistic interpretation of the *Pársí* religion attempted by *Dosabhái*, the ablest of the controversialists who lately appeared in its defence in Bombay, has been generally repudiated as inconsistent with the past history of Zoroastrianism and the present standards of that faith.

6. It was stoutly alleged, both by visitors to the mission-house in which the youths were accommodated, and by writers in the native newspapers, that

the convictions of the youths in favour of Christianity had been produced in an unfair manner. No allowances were made for the natural effects upon their minds of English studies, of private reading, of intercourse with serious inquirers, of intercommunion with Christian converts, and of visits to Christian missionaries. Their impressions had wholly originated, it was maintained, in the unlawful and irregular teaching of Christianity in the Elphinstone Institution, by Mr. Ardeshrí Frámjî, one of the instructors at that seminary, who is well known to be a friend of missionaries, and not unfavourably inclined to the religion of the Bible. No limit seemed to be set for some time to the abuse of this liberal-minded and promising young man. What the result has been the public already knows. Ardeshrî, it has been declared by Government, had not transcended his duty in his academical tuition; while those who had acted otherwise than he had done, have been found to have fallen short of their duty. The rule of an impartial teaching of English literature, as such, has been laid down for all the Government Educational Seminaries in the West of India. The minute made on the occasion is most just and equitable. It runs in these words:—

“ On the 23d June last, the Oriental translator brought to the notice of Government certain articles which had appeared in the *Jâmi-Jamshîd*, a daily Gujarâtî paper, and the *Pârsî Punch*, also a Gujarâtî paper, charging Ardeshrî Frámjî Mus, a teacher in the Elphinstone Institution, with teaching Christianity to the boys of his class, contrary to orders. Under date the 30th idem, the Director of Public Instruction was

requested to ascertain whether Ardeshr had infringed the orders of Government, as alleged in the above vernacular publications. Mr. Erskine accordingly submitted, with his own opinion thereon, a communication from the Principal of the Elphinstone Institution, with accompaniments, reporting the result of the inquiry instituted in the matter."

### RESOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT.

"His Lordship in Council concurs with the Director of Public Instruction in considering that the result of the inquiry instituted by the latter has been to establish, that Mr. Ardeshr has, as a teacher, used only the authorized class of books of the Institution, and that he has used these in a strictly authorized manner, and without any attempt to uphold, by their means, the dogmata or doctrines of any system of religion. But on reading the correspondence and 'statement' submitted by the Director of Public Instruction, with reference to this matter, it appears to the Governor in Council that there is some reason to fear that an overstrained jealousy against doctrinal expositions may be allowed to operate unfairly as regards the pupils of the Elphinstone College, by interfering with their progress in an acquaintance with the literature of England and other countries, simply as literature, and without reference to the religious opinions of the writers with whose works all persons pretending to any degree of literary knowledge, must have more or less acquaintance. As there could be no correct appreciation of the literature of ancient Greece and Rome, were all passages of Greek and Latin authors, which bear upon their religious tenets, to be altogether omitted or left unexplained, and as few, if any, Sanskrit books could be understood without some knowledge of the systems of Hindu religious philosophy—which knowledge is required also in order to understand the existing vernacular literature of the country and its laws—so it appears utterly impossible that pupils can ever become acquainted with even the most purely secular literature of any other people, though they



may be with its language, if all passages in which reference is made to the religion of that people be omitted or ignored. The Governor in Council has considered it necessary to record these remarks, from observing the apparent apprehension of disapproval with which some of the instructors, whose statements are before him, have explained the really unobjectionable mode in which they have proceeded, and the assurance of another that he has been 'in the habit of omitting all passages in which the name of Christ was mentioned,' and of only '*sometimes* retaining those in which He was indirectly referred to.' His Lordship in Council cannot imagine that this course can be acceptable to the intelligent natives of this country, whether Hindus, Muhammadans, or Pársis; and he cannot consider it necessary or justifiable to omit such passages, or withhold explanations necessary to illustrate their meaning, any more than he does to omit passages referring to Vishnu, Shiva, Muhammad, or Hormazd. In no case should such passages be made use of by a teacher in any Government school to advance his own religious views, or to offend the religious feelings of others."

In this resolution, nothing more than simple justice has been done to Christianity on the question raised, the Government seminaries being considered in the light merely of literary and scientific institutions. It is highly creditable to the Government of Lord Elphinstone. It is quite in accordance with demands which we have urged, for many years,\* in behalf of an impartial treatment of our English literature, and with the practice, too little avowed, of some of the best of the Government educationists. That all the natives are satisfied with it cannot be said; but that not a single man of intelligence in

\* See *Evangelization of India*, pp. 333, 334, and various notices in the *Oriental Christian Spectator*.

their community can lift up his voice against it, is also manifest. It is only by the recognition of the principle which it involves, that native education in India could be tolerated by the British people. Independently of that principle, it must be borne in mind that, as far as the question of religious liberty is concerned, the friend of Christianity is free to declare in private his judgment and convictions, independently of the Government seminaries, whenever he pleases. If Mr. Ardeshír, or any other candid inquirer amongst the Pársís, has done this, it is clearly a matter of personal right.

7. Great antipathy to the Bible was manifested by many of the native teachers and fellow-students of the catechumens. This antipathy was so strong, and associated with so much ignorance and conceit, that it is somewhat difficult to account for its origin. Most certain it is, that those in whom it most conspicuously appeared had never made the Bible a subject of serious attention, not to speak of sober study. They seemed, or professed to be, quite unaware of the hold which the Bible has had, and still has, of the minds and hearts of those who have given it most attention, including many of the most highly enlightened and endowed men which the world has yet seen; and that it is recommended to the natives of India by the judgment, as well as offered by the benevolence, of the churches of Britain, of Europe, and of America. The most striking testimonies in its favour meet the eye of every intelligent student

and inquirer.\* Though every man has to settle the question of the reception of the Bible as the Word of God on his own responsibility, no person, in the view of such testimonies as are addressed to him in its behalf, is at liberty to treat it with contempt or derision. "Imagine not," I have said on a former occasion, "that its high and exclusive claims, and self-denying demands, have been accepted without inquiry—without the most careful and profound investigation. Those mighty minds which have penetrated the innermost recesses of their own being; which have analysed the most secret springs of human thought and feeling and action; which have so sagaciously philosophized on the changes of society, and the advancement and decline of the nations of the earth; which have surveyed the whole face of the world on which we dwell, and the countless diversities of beings which inhabit its wide domains; which have dived into the recesses of the deep, and explored the caverns of the earth; and which have measured and weighed the masses of the worlds which roll in the heaven above, and observed and developed the laws which regulate their mighty movements;—those great minds, I say, which have engaged in all this research and achieved all these wonders, have not vainly and inconsiderately surrendered their faith to the religion of the Bible. No; they have considered and weighed its claims before they have pronounced their judgment. Its authority has been established, in their view, by irrefragable

\* Take as samples those given in pp. 38-41 of this little publication.

evidence. They acknowledge it to be the source of all the hopes of salvation which they are permitted to cherish, and of all that natural greatness and majesty which you yourselves cannot but admire. The Bible, in the providence of God, comes before you with their united, their strong recommendation; and it becomes you seriously to entertain the question of its Divine origin, to see whether or not it is fitted to allay the fears of your conscience, to satisfy your desires for happiness, and to confer upon you all the spiritual blessings of which you stand in need."\* Its palpable effects, too, on individuals, families, and communities, of all ranks and orders of man, in every land in which it is known, should secure for it the deepest respect of all those to whom it is proffered. Its highest, its essential blessings, are of a spiritual character; and these are manifest in the humblest as well as the highest of its recipients. It brings enlightenment, peace, reconciliation to God, purification, and exaltation, to all by whom it is received by faith.

8. The actual objections brought against the Bible by the parties to whom I have now referred, were of the most frivolous and unsubstantial character, and urged without the least acknowledgment of the numerous and satisfactory refutations which they have often received. It was urged, for example, that the account of the creation given in Genesis cannot be inspired, as it speaks of the creation of light before the sun; while the most advanced phi-

\* *First Religion*, pp. 473, 474.

losophy points to light and electricity as likely to have been the very substances and agencies earliest called into existence and operation in the work of creation. All men, it was declared, cannot, as Moses says, be descended from a single pair; while the examination of the language and structure, and spiritual nature, and even physical development of man throughout the whole world, actually shows the unity of the human family, the strength of the evidence of the fact accumulating from day to day.\* God, it was maintained, is set forth in the Bible as a corporeal and material being, because He is there sometimes represented with eyes, or ears, or mouth, or hands, or feet; while the simplest reader of the Bible may see, that this ascription to Him of bodily organs is merely figurative, and designed to aid us finite beings in the conception (inadequate it must ever be, though important as far as it goes) of the Infinite, and to mark the actual knowledge, power, and agency of God, all of whose perfections, both natural and moral, are set forth in association with

\* When the unity of the human race was most confidently attacked by a Páris connected with a scientific profession, I pointed his particular attention to the following passage in the admirable paper of Dr. Max Müller on Comparative Mythology, in the *Oxford Essays* for 1856 :—" It is hardly possible to look at the evidence hitherto collected [of the intimate relations of the Indo-Teutonic family of languages] . . . without feeling that these words are the fragments of a real language, once spoken by a united race, at a time which the historian has lately hardly ventured to realize, except on the authority of the sacred writings of the Jews. Yet, here we have in our hands the relics of that distant time." I also offered to produce proof positive of the relationship of the other European, African, and American languages to this family of tongues and to one another. The objector acknowledged the application of these facts, though, as he remarked, he had not formerly adverted to them.

what is figurative, in language of the greatest plainness and sublimity, as when it is intimated that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." \* The Bible, it was held, degrades God, by saying that He repented that He had made man; though this objection had been solved, even to the Pársís, a quarter of a century ago. "When it is intimated that God repented that He had made man, proper figurative language is used. We learn nothing more from the statement, than that the conduct of man was so bad, that it required a corresponding change in the procedure (and regard) of God. This change we best understand by the term repentance. We never suppose that the repentance spoken of is like that of man, any more than we suppose that when the 'hand of God' is spoken of, anything more is meant than the energy or power of God. The literal passages in the Bible inform us how we are to understand the figurative." † The Bible was made answerable for the sins of Moses, David, and others, though it uniformly condemns them. "The faithfulness of the Christian Scriptures," I have observed in my work on the Pársí religion, "has been frequently appealed to as a proof of their credibility and inspiration. They are impartial in their accounts both of nations and individuals. They conceal not, and they flatter not. They represent human nature

\* Prov. xv. 3.

† Letter of the author to the Editor of the *Jdmi-Jamshíd*, 7th October 1833.

as it actually is, both in its best and worst estates. They exhibit examples of goodness for our encouragement and imitation ; and they record examples of evil that we may avoid it, and be taught watchfulness and humility. They show us the sincerity of repentance, as well as the atrociousness of guilt. Their object is not to exalt man, but to glorify God. It is only because Kalam Kas [a Pársi controversialist] overlooks their character in this respect, that he finds fault with them for bringing before our notice the sins of Lot, Jacob's sons, David, Solomon, and others. Had they approved of the transgressions of these distinguished men, they might have been objected to ; but as they uniformly condemn them, their truthfulness and holiness must be respected. The mention which they make of sin is not, in a single instance, that of palliation, but of marked disapprobation. We find no parallel to it in any of the false systems of religion. Muhammad, it is well known, claims in the Korán the authority of God for his most marked transgressions, and denounces the most fearful judgments against any one who would venture to apply the principles of moral right to the estimate of his conduct. The writers of the Hindu Shástras relate innumerable transgressions of the heroes of their stories—of the very gods themselves ; but in no instance do they describe them as sinful. On the contrary, they expressly declare that this is not their character. For the objects of their veneration, they claim the prerogative of listing wrong and acting as they list,

without challenge. The Pársís, we have seen, ascribe to Jamshíd freedom from all sin; and they attribute to Zoroaster the holiness of God himself. Edal Dáru tells us that Hormazd gave him the title *Ashaum* or Aso, one of the three great names expressive of divine purity, which he is said to claim for himself.\* The objections to which I have now alluded have all been repeated in print, in a silly work entitled, *Kristi Dharmanun Khotárun*, the first number of which I hold in my hands.† In using them, the Pársís, while in no degree injuring Christianity, are really fighting against Zoroastrianism, in which manifest errors and inexplicable difficulties, and improprieties are constantly presented to their view.

\* *Parsi Religion*, pp. 368, 369.

† The Pársís have been so much excited by the late movement towards Christianity by some of their youth, that they have commenced a monthly publication in Gujaráti, entitled, *Kristi Dharmanun Khotárun*, or the "Falsehood of the Christian Religion." The number for July consists of seventy pages octavo, and that for August is of the same size. The periodical is sold at four annas a number. About 107 pages of it are occupied by the translation of a silly infidel work, by a "Robert Cooper," and the rest of it is devoted to the coarse and oft-refuted *Age of Reason*, by Thomas Paine. We have been glad to find that many of the Pársi youths, whom these miserable reproductions are designed to prejudice against the truth, are quite aware of the unfairness both of their representations and reasonings. We heard a Muhammadan, who had a page or two of "Cooper" read to him, exclaim, "Why, that writer is *díwánd* (mad)." A Pársi present remarked, on the occasion, that he was at least *díwánd-sarakho*, "like a madman." Familiarity with the Bible is the best defence against the assaults of its enemies. The more it is known, the more it will be respected. To our young native friends, then, we say, "SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES" They will find in the numerous works published on the evidences of Christianity, a solution of all the difficulties invented by infidels. We refer them for these works to the Depository of the Tract and Book Society, and to the libraries of the missionaries.—*O. C. S. August 1856.*



9. The moral convictions of the young men respecting matters of supreme importance—the necessity of the pardon of their sins and the sanctification of their souls, in which their spiritual solicitude was represented by them as chiefly consisting, were made light of by most of their visitors. It was with much surprise that we heard a young man of talent and education, declaring, and with apparent sincerity, that he was not conscious of having committed a single sin, either of omission or commission, for many years. Were he taken at his word, the only rational conclusion would be, that he was either altogether ignorant of the principles of Divine law, or that his conscience had become “seared with a hot iron.” Where there is no consciousness of guilt, there can be no desire of salvation. “They that be whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick.” Those who have no experience of the “humble and contrite heart,” cannot be expected to appreciate the serious motives by which candid inquirers are actuated in their desire to embrace Christianity. In searching for motives of another character to attribute to them, the Pársí opponents showed no anxiety to keep within the bounds of truth. “Dr. Wilson,” they said, “had offered to Behrámjí a free passage to England [which at one time he had really been anxious to visit], provided he embraced Christianity.” It was in vain that trouble was taken to contradict this and numerous similar inventions to those who were interested in their propagation.

10. The most liberal offers of money, employment, gain, and advantage were unblushingly made to the young men, provided they would leave the house of their Christian instructors. "You will get employment and plenty with the Pársís; why stay with the 'padres?'" This was a temptation with which they were constantly assailed. As far as it was intended to withdraw them from adherence to the truth as it is in the Saviour, it is more than matched by his own solemn question, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" \*

11. When the young men urged their conscientious convictions in explanation of the course which they were pursuing, it was said to them, "You can be Christians in heart without being Christians in public profession." The appropriate reply was given in the words of Christ himself, "Whoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." † It is a strange faith which can-

\* Matt. xvi. 26.

† Luke xii. 8. The whole of this remarkable chapter is recommended to the serious study of religious inquirers. The speaker in it is the Lord Jesus Christ. He warns His disciples against the snares with which they were beset:—against hypocrisy; against the fear of man; against distrust of the gracious providence of God; against the denial of the Son of Man—the representative of man in the matter of his salvation; against sin; against the Holy Ghost—the only effectual agent in the application of the redemption purchased by the Son of Man; against perturbation and confusion before synagogues, magistrates, and powers; and (after an interruption from an individual of the "multitude," such as missionaries often encounter) against covetousness; against presumptive confidence in

not be avowed. If a child should confess its parent, and if a wife should confess her husband, the convinced soul should confess its Saviour.

12. "If you will embrace Christianity, don't do so at present. Wait till you are older. We shall be answerable for the sin you commit in not becoming Christians at present." So ran the temptation to delay and procrastination, which, urged by the common enemies of the believer—the devil, the world, and the flesh—is so fatal to many unwary souls. "Now," however, "is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." There is no assurance, in any one case, of the continuance of human life for a month, a week, a day, or even an hour. Truth demands immediate obedience. Resistance to its claims is injurious to the whole moral framework of man. The Holy Spirit who strives to enlighten and convert the soul, cannot be trifled with, with impunity. The cry and entreaty of Wisdom are, "Turn ye at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when

earthly treasures and enjoyments; against sinful anxiety about food and raiment; against doubts about the bestowment of the kingdom of God; and against remissness in watching for the coming of the Master of the house.

distress and anguish come upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof: therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." \* Even independently of these imminent and awful dangers, the inexpediency of procrastination must be apparent to every rational mind. We cannot too soon have our sins pardoned. We cannot too soon enjoy the light of God's gracious and reconciled countenance, ready to burst forth upon us when we take refuge in the grace of His Son. We cannot too soon be renewed and sanctified. We cannot too soon have the Gospel assurance, and say each of us to our God, "Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." †

13. "Come home; you shall have liberty of conscience at home, and liberty to attend the missionaries whenever you please. We give you our word, that you shall not be annoyed or interfered with in any degree. Look at all these guarantees around you—what more do you want? your mother is dying, really dying, because she cannot see you at

\* Prov. i. 23-31.

† Psalm lxxiii. 23-26.

present." These combined assurances and representations, repeated with every possible asseveration from hour to hour, and from day to day, and corroborated by messenger after messenger from the Pársí quarters, obtained credence from three of the youths who had in the first instance joined the mission-house. How little they have been regarded is known to all here present. Happy was it for Behrámjí that he fell not into the snare which was thus provided for them all.\*

14. Behrámjí, who believes that he best consults his interests, and does most justice to his convictions and spiritual wants, when he seeks the society and tuition of those who are willing to instruct him in the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, has been greatly abused in the native papers for his steadfast adherence to what he considers the cause of truth. His relatives and

\* In reference to the methods here alluded to, by which the young men were assailed, a judicious friend (not an agent of the mission) who was a witness of what occurred, thus writes, in a letter dated 26th June 1856:—"There was no sincerity in these proposals, and as to the dying state of the relatives, it was only a manoeuvre, to say the least of it; for the sickness of the relatives only amounted to mental depression and anxiety on the absence of the young men. From seven o'clock in the morning [of the third day] till four o'clock, were these young men worried by these people, all of them occupying a respectable position in the Bombay community. One of the young men at last yielded, having been worked up to quite a frenzy of feeling about his mother, and wished to go home, on the promise being given him, that he should be allowed to return after an hour. But every promise, assurance, and proposal given were insincere and faithless. There was one object to be gained, and that was to get the young men away from the mission-house, and no means, however unscrupulous, were overlooked for that purpose. . . . On the fifth day, two others yielded to a similar course of treatment."—*News of the Churches*, 1st September 1856.

friends, too, have been greatly reproached for holding intercourse with him. The shameful endeavour of many is to make his conversion the unnecessary occasion of a family rupture. But for the issue, which is in the hands of God, he is prepared, we trust, through Divine grace. The attempt, on the other hand, has been made to bribe him away from his instructors, and to get him to delay embracing Christianity, by the offer of money to proceed to England, while provision should, at the same time, be made for his family remaining in India.\*

15. It is almost a matter of course, that, for what has occurred, we, the missionaries, should be treated with the obloquy and hatred of not a few. With all this, and much more, we laid our account long before we left the land of our fathers. The representations which have been made of us in certain quarters, as the constant enemies of the Pársís, have no foundation in truth, and gain no credit in native society in general. For ourselves, we would say, before both God and man, that we bear to them the most benevolent regard. We look to much connected with their past history and present social state, with the deepest interest. Not a few of them I rejoice to number among my personal friends. I desire, in behalf of all of them, and the other natives of India, the possession of every blessing which I

\* This, it will be remembered, was penned before his baptism. Since that event occurred, he has had much friendly intercourse with the members of his family belonging to the priesthood, both at their home and in the mission-house, though certain parties have recommended injury to be done to him both in his conjugal and paternal interests.

value for myself in time and eternity. In their service I have long studied, and taught, and toiled, and suffered—not without peculiar and precious encouragements; and in their service, as that of Christ my Lord and Master and Saviour, I trust I shall be prepared, by Divine grace, to do whatever else may be demanded of me by Divine providence. We appeal from the passing to the coming generation.

These brief explanations and apologetic remarks, I trust, will not be without some use to the different classes of the community now listening to me. Consideration, prayer, and determination are required of all now before me. The good work of religious inquiry which has been begun among the students of this city, will, I am certain, not come to a speedy close. One and another of them will, it is hoped, soon seek to enter the Christian fold.\*

\* The anticipation here expressed has been in some degree realized, and that in circumstances worthy of particular notice.

“The movement towards Christianity among the students of Bombay still continues, and the fruits of it, we trust, will in due time appear. The temper of the members of the Muhammadan community has just been tried by the defection from the Islamic faith of an interesting young man, Sayyad Hasan el-Mediniyah, now a candidate for baptism at the Free Church Mission-house, Ambrolle. We are very happy to state that his former co-religionists, among whom his family has long occupied a respectable position, have behaved, in their interviews with him, in a most honest, honourable, and truthful manner,—bringing against him no false accusation, offering him no threat, holding out to him no bribe, collecting, encouraging, or tolerating no mob to overawe him, and making no unmanly appeals to his feelings irrespective of what is right or wrong; and confining, at the same time, their efforts to reclaim him to reasoning and fair argument from their own erroneous point of view. While they have maintained that he has dishonoured ‘the seal of the prophets,’ of whose loins they consider him to have sprung, they have finally left him to the ‘judg-

Through the moving and directing influences of the Holy Spirit, we may ere long see multitudes here flocking to the Church of the Redeemer as doves to their windows.

I conclude this lecture by repeating the two following simple but important counsels on the subject of religious inquiry.

1. Cultivate, in all your religious inquiries, the love of truth, and maintain a teachable spirit. "Buy the truth," at any cost, "and sell it not." Seek for the knowledge of God and of Divine things as those who feel its supreme importance, as connected both with the Divine glory and your own good and everlasting salvation. Be not overborne by human authority, however plausible it may appear to be; but humbly submit to the Divine teaching of the works and ways, and Word, and Spirit of God. Remember that pride and conceit are unfavourable both to the discernment of truth and progress in its

ment of God,' holding that while, in a well-ordered Islamic state, his life would be forfeited under the *traditional law* of the Muhammadans, no such penalty is exacted by the *Kurdn*, or practicable or desirable under the British Government. For their creditable toleration, in the form in which it has appeared, few were prepared. How far it may have originated in a desire on the part of the Muhammadans to place themselves in favourable contrast to certain Pársis, lately before the public, or in the wish not unduly to advertise what they may consider their shame, or in other mundane considerations, we cannot say. But the *fact* is worthy of notice, and calls for gratitude to Him who stilleth the 'tumult of the people,' as well as the 'noise of the seas.'—*O. C. Spectator*, October 1856.

Another Pársi student, also, Shápúrjî Edaljí, has presented himself as a hopeful candidate for baptism at the Free Church Mission-house, where he is at present residing, his experience of promised liberty of conscience in his own family, tested for a month after he had declared his convictions, having proved unsatisfactory.—[See subjoined paper, p. 118.]



acquisition. "To this man will I look," says God, "even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word." "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way."

2. Readily yield to the dictates of truth when they are discerned by you. When you refuse to follow them, you set yourselves in opposition to God, their author and avenger. Ignorance of what should be known is sinful, but disobedience, after instruction received and understood, is still more sinful. Trust in the God of Truth, whatever be the opposition which you may experience at the hands of your fellow-men. Greater, you may well believe on His own word, is He that is for you than all they that can be against you. Even though matters, in the all-wise and faithful providence of God, should go to extremities, you will not be forsaken. "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."\* But let not fear alone be your constraining motive. Seek that perfect love which casteth out fear. Lay hold of the love of God in Christ Jesus, and say, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as

\* Luke xii. 4, 5.

sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CONVERSION AND BAPTISM OF TWO STUDENTS  
OF  
THE ELPHINSTONE INSTITUTION, BOMBAY.

(FROM THE "ORIENTAL CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.")

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WE have been requested by several friends to be somewhat particular in our notice of this case ; and, for reasons which we need not specially mention, we comply with the wishes which have been expressed to us. The following narrative, taken principally from a letter of Dr. Wilson, and the documents which are subjoined, probably contain all the information connected with it which is desiderated.

The baptism of Sayyad Hasan and of Shápurjí Edaljí took place in the Free Church Mission-house, Ambrolie, Bombay, on the 8th February, before a peaceable and deeply-interested congregation of natives and Europeans. The introductory devotional exercises were on this occasion conducted by the Rev. Dr. Glasgow, and the sermon was preached and the ordinance administered by Dr. Wilson. The text was from Jer. xxix. 8, "Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive

you," which was applied particularly to "The Trial of Muhammad by his own Tests." Dr. Wilson hopes to be able to introduce the substance of the discourse into the new edition of his work on Muhammadanism, which he has been preparing for some time, with special reference to the latest course of oriental research and critical investigation of the Kurán. The Personal Statements of both the young men, copies of which are subjoined, were quite analogous to that of Behrámjí, another student lately baptized, and equally satisfactory and gratifying. They were read by them with much modesty and feeling, and awakened much sympathy. They show a very clear apprehension of the first principles of the oracles of God, especially as connected with the doctrines of the atonement and justification by faith, and refer to a Christian experience which has every appearance, to the eye of man, of being genuine.

Sayyad Hasan is a young man of great promise and amiability. In his childhood, he had the advantage of the counsels and example of an enlightened father, who was one of the first Muhammadans in Bombay who enjoyed a thorough English education, and who became a teacher in the Government College, in connexion with which Dr. Wilson had long ago made his acquaintance. His first inquiries relative to Christianity, and indefinite desires to embrace it, arose in his mind when he himself was attending the class in that seminary taught by Mr. Ardeshir Frámjî, with whose name many are now familiar. In December 1855, he went to

the English congregation of the Free Church, to hear Dr. Duff preach a missionary sermon; but on observing the entrance of some Muhammadans hostile to Christianity, he left the congregation before the commencement of the service, lest he should be accused by them of favouring Christianity, and thus led either to make a premature avowal of his attachment to it, or tempted to conceal his real religious convictions. Before he went out, however, he had a short conversation with an excellent Christian lady, (Mrs. Miller,) who quoted to him the text, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," which made a deep impression on his mind. A few days afterwards he called at the Mission-house, expecting to have an interview with Dr. Wilson, and finding him absent with Dr. Duff, he addressed a note to Mrs. Wilson, asking from her a copy of the Bible, which she readily furnished to him. His experience on perusing it was, that the entrance of the Word of God giveth light, that it giveth understanding to the simple. In a second note he asked from Mrs. Wilson a book of prayers, to aid him in his devotions. Having no suitable work of this kind at hand to send him, she advised him to express his own desires in his own language before God, and directed him to several of the Psalms, in which he would observe the breathings of the devotion of the saints of old under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, by which all may be instructed and guided to the latest

generation. The advice of this letter, which he felt obliged to destroy to avoid detection, was earnestly received and acted upon by him. He continued his inquiries; and he reappeared in the Mission-house in connexion with the movements of the Pársí students, whose cases awakened so much interest at the commencement of the monsoon. Mr. White and Dr. Wilson, who had opportunities of intercourse with him, then and afterwards, presented to him several publications, including the controversial pamphlets on Muhammadanism of Dr. Pfander and Dr. Wilson, which alienated his mind more and more from the teacher of Mecca, and prepared him to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus. Some weeks after Behrámjí's baptism, which occurred on the 31st August, he intimated to Dr. Wilson his intention of following his example; and, after several interviews for religious exercises and instruction, he was encouraged to carry his purpose into effect. On the 15th of October he was received into the Mission-house, where he got much instruction, in the communication of which Dr. Wilson was constantly aided by Dr. Glasgow, Mr. White, and Mr. Dhanjibháí, when he could be with them. Much of his reading, and that of Shápurjí, was with the friend from whom he first received a copy of the Word of God. Behrámjí, too, was of much use to him, encouraging him in his Christian profession. Dr. Wilson had to share with him the brunt of the battle in discussions with the learned Muhammadans, who earnestly, but ineffectually, sought to re-establish him in the Musalman

faith. Not the least violence or intolerance appeared among any of his relatives, who were permitted freely to visit him. They have just humanely and honestly aided him in the disposal by sale of a house which he got by inheritance from his father, and the forfeiture of which, on his part, has been prevented by the righteous law passed in 1850, under the administration of Lord Dalhousie, and which secures the heritable rights of converts to Christianity, though it cannot prevent those personal alienations which are so frequently made in their case by offended parents and other connexions.

The religious impressions and inquiries of Shá-purjí Edaljí originated in the same class of the Elphinstone Institution that those of Sayyad Hasan did. One of the first Christian publications which he got hold of was Bishop Horne's Sermons, which he bought from a Borah, and cut into small portions, that he might be able to read a portion of them now and then without the observation of his relatives, who had taken from him a copy of the Bible, which he had acquired in the same manner. Being, with his friend and acquaintance Sayyad Hasan, a member of the "Juvenile Improvement Library," he there got several Christian publications which he perused, especially Dr. Wilson's Sermon to the Pársís, which he had taken out for about six successive issues of ten days each, and Mr. Mitchell's *Letters to Indian Youth*, for inadvertently detaining which he offended the native committee of the Institution, the secretary of which gave him no encouragement

in his use of Christian books. At one time he was strongly tempted to infidelity, but after reading Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*, for which he had sent to Calcutta, he could get no satisfaction in its scenes of blackness, and darkness, and dread. He came to Dr. Wilson on the 17th and 24th of June, during the height of the excitement of his tribe, and partly opened his mind to him, and received that advice which his circumstances seemed to require, with the present of the small publication which he had so often taken out of the library from which he was excluded. He soon afterwards wrote to Dr. W. for a small pocket New Testament, which he had promised to get for him. He attended Dr. Wilson, at the close of the rains, on several occasions, along with Sayyad Hasan; and, on the 15th of October, he asked the Doctor by letter to receive him into the Mission-house as a candidate for baptism, which he immediately did. He had no sooner found shelter in Dr. Wilson's family, than he was induced to leave it by a brother, who professed to sympathize with him in his desire to embrace Christianity, and who promised to extend to him the fullest religious liberty. He soon found, however, that the assurances given to him were not acted upon by his relatives, either in the house of his brother or his father, where he was kept substantially in restraint for nearly a month; and, agreeably to notices which he had repeatedly given to Dr. Wilson by post, he made his escape from his father's house in Kulaba, and drove to Dr. Wilson's house, into which he was



again most readily received. His instructions there have been by the parties already mentioned in this communication. The attempts made by his father, and other relatives, to withdraw him from the care of the missionaries, have been day after day, and week after week, of the most urgent, varied, and ingenious character, and, in this respect, he has had more to suffer than any convert who has yet been received into the mission. Yet, by the grace of God, he has stood fast in the Lord, witnessing a good confession before many witnesses. His father, who is a man of some substance, has had much intercourse with Europeans, and, it is hoped, he will yet be reconciled to the important step which he has taken. At any rate, the youth himself is to be viewed with fervent interest, for his steadiness and devotedness, and to be commended in prayer to that grace which is able still to keep him from falling. Along with Sayyad Hasan, he has just commenced his systematic studies in the College Division of the Free General Assembly's Institution.

The personal statements of both these young disciples of Christ are subjoined :—

*PERSONAL STATEMENT of Sayyad Hasan Medinīyah.*

“ ‘What must I do to be saved?’ is the question which I have been lately, under Divine grace and guidance, led to ask. The unspeakable importance of this appears to me when I am convinced that I was conceived and born in sin, that I am depraved by nature, and have a heart which is the polluted fountain from whence all the muddy streams of evil thought

and conduct flow. I feel that I am a great sinner, in that I have transgressed the law of God, and have rebelled against His authority. I have been quite alienated from God. I have not loved Him; and not to love Him, the Author and Preserver of my life, is all sins in one. In short, I have been guilty of sins both of commission and omission; and I naturally stand in no relation to God but that of a rebel. When I consider that I am an immortal being, born for eternity, and possessed of a soul that will never go out of existence, and that God is a holy God, bearing infinite hatred and opposition to sin, and having infinite purity, and inviolable truth, and being so inflexibly just as to be compelled by the perfection of His nature to reveal His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, I dread the loss of my soul. And what is that loss? It is the loss of heaven, with all its felicities and glories; it is the banishment of my soul from the blessed presence of its Creator; it is the loss of the favour of God, the life of all rational creatures. This loss also includes the sufferings of hell, the endurance of the curse of God, and the falling of the soul into that place where 'the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'

Muhammadanism can give no satisfactory answer to the question with which this statement begins. I find that repentance cannot lead a holy and just God to overlook the dishonour done to His law by my rebellion and ungratefulness, and that salvation cannot flow from it. It would be productive of much evil, supposing it could. 'Repentance is frequently unavailing, even in reference to the affairs of human society and the ordinary occurrences of human life. A man who spends his substance and his health in sinful courses does not recover them when he is convinced that he has done wrong, confesses the folly of his conduct, and even cherishes the sorrow of penitence. The criminal who is deservedly condemned to death generally suffers his merited punishment, notwithstanding all his fears and sinkings of soul, and all his tears, regrets, and entreaties. No earthly sovereign, in announcing his laws to his subjects, would declare to them, that while they ought to

obey these laws, that they had only to get sorrow for any transgressions into which they might fall, in order to obtain pardon. His authority as a ruler would not be respected, were he to recognise it as a principle of his government, that repentance formed an atonement for transgression; and far less would the majesty and authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords be manifested and respected, were He to promulgate, that in repentance He can find an adequate satisfaction for His offended justice.\* The giving of *Zakát* and *Saddakat*, or alms, cannot purchase the pardon of sin. Abstinence from eating and drinking during the month of Ramzán cannot mitigate the punishment which I as a sinner deserve, and which God, to uphold His justice, should inflict. The proceeding to Mecca for Haj, or pilgrimage, cannot restore me to the favour of God. The throwing of stones in the valley of Mina, to drive away the devil; the kissing of the Hajar a' Swad, or the black stone of the Caaba; and the drinking of the water of the well Zemzem, cannot absolve and deliver me from the power of sin. In the warrior of Mecca, I cannot find a Saviour, notwithstanding the tenacious opinion of his followers to the effect—which is quite groundless, as appears from Muhammad's own confession of his own sins in several passages of the Kurán, and his distinct declaration—that 'every soul must bear its own burden.' Under such circumstances, the religion of Arabia is quite unable to answer convincingly the question, 'What must I do to be saved?'

"But this question is answered by the Bible. It informs us, that 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' It is pleasing to observe, that this verse was for the first time presented to my attention by a beloved sister in Jesus now present before you,† the successful inquiry after the truth of which, under Divine grace, and the perusal of the Holy Bible, a copy of which was first pre-

\* *Sermon on Justification*, by Dr. Wilson.

† Mrs. Miller.

sented to me by one of my present revered instructors—at the same time an affectionate mother in our common Lord,\*—has brought me to stand before you in my present position. 'According to this scheme, as must necessarily be the case, God Himself devised the plan of redemption. He determined to magnify His mercy in the salvation of a portion of the human race, with a due regard to the great principles of His moral administration of the affairs of the universe. The righteousness of fallen man, with all its impurities and imperfections, as we have seen, He could not accept. The righteousness of the angels and created principalities and powers in heaven, who have never known sin, He could not transfer from themselves, from whom it is demanded to its furthest extent on their own account. Sin He could not lightly deal with, so as to leave the impression, either amongst the inhabitants of earth below or heaven above, that it is only a trifle, or of little account in the jurisprudence of the Most High. The authority of that law which interdicts all transgression, He could not lower; and its dreadful sanctions He could not keep in abeyance. An object, in the appointment of whom His mercy, His sovereign mercy, to the human race should be conspicuously displayed, and in the treatment of whom His unspotted holiness and unswerving justice should be most signally manifested, was needed by God, and was found by God. To that infinitely glorious Being, who participates in the unity of His own nature, who stands to Him in the relation of an only-begotten Son, as eternally existing in Himself, and as being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and the object of His greatest love, He proposed that He should become the surety, and substitute, and ransom of fallen man; and that, for the accomplishment of this grand and infinitely important object, He should leave the bosom of the Father, assume the nature of man, become subject to and honour the law, instruct the world, endure unspeakable sufferings in behalf of those whom He should save, and present His unspotted soul as a sacrifice for the redemption of those who

\* Mrs. Wilson.

were to be constituted the monuments of the Divine mercy. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The evil of sin, which He voluntarily allowed His Father to lay on His account, was awfully displayed at the hour of His crucifixion. In all that He did, and in all that He endured, there was infinite merit, for He was a Divine Saviour, whose services and sufferings possessed an infinitely intrinsic value, and on them there rested no legal claim, except that which is to be found in His own voluntary promises and engagements. The merit which He purchased and procured, had men, guilty, undeserving men, as its intended recipients; and it is this merit which is offered to, and pressed on the acceptance of men, in the Gospel. To every anxious soul which makes the inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" the reply is given, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." To those who renounce all confidence in themselves, and exercise faith in His name, and trust in His perfect righteousness, He extends a free and full pardon of every transgression, and gives a free and a full remission of every demand. He delivers all who take refuge in His grace from their liability to hell, and from the eternal punishment which they have merited, and which is the portion of those who continue impenitent and unbelieving. When they lay hold of His righteousness by faith, He views them as righteous in His sight, receives them into His favour, adopts them into His family, and appoints them to eternal glory in the regions of bliss.\*

"Now, having by faith laid hold of my Redeemer and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, let me ask whether I have undergone the change required in this passage, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Although I do feel myself to be a miserable sinner, yet by God's grace I try my best to keep myself from sin. I perceive that I have lived without God, for I have not loved, served, and glorified Him. I now see that all my worldly-mindedness, folly, and wickedness have sprung from a depraved heart, a heart alien-

\* *Sermon on Justification*, by Dr. Wilson.

ated from God. I formerly thought I was quite as I ought to be; but I now perceive that I have been altogether what I ought not to be. I stand before God a convicted, self-condemned sinner. My whole soul has been disordered and depraved. All my thoughts, my affections, my desires, have been alienated from God. I now see what patience was it that God did not crush me, a poor feeble creature, that had no virtue before Him, and no power to resist Him. I mourn for my past transgressions, and strive to avoid sin. Practices that before were delighted in, are now, through the Divine grace, abhorred and shunned by me. Formerly I was neglecting prayer; but I now know that it is my vital breath, and that in it is fellowship with the Father and His dear Son, Jesus Christ. Formerly, I did not attend the preaching of the Word of God; but I now do, and know that it is one of the means of growing in grace, I now feel happy in the company of God's people, and delight in the perusal of His holy Word. These are the grounds of my humble trust, that God, in infinite love and condescension, has touched my heart.

"But not all this is sufficient. There is one thing required by me, and that is, the sanctification of my soul. May I be daily cured of the spiritual disease with which I am infected by inherent depravity, and 'renewed in the whole man after the image of God,' and be enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness.

"Now, brethren, let me express my views in reference to the instruction and conversion of the Muhammadans. I earnestly entreat you not to allow yourselves to lie dead to the occurrences of conversion to Christianity that take place around you, and which threaten the destruction of your ancestral creed, as well as every other system of false religion. Do not deceive yourselves by saying that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are corrupted, and that the present are not the genuine copies of the same, as you are induced to believe. Be not afraid of touching the Holy Bible, as some of you are. When you have once taken it in hand, read it with care and diligence, and when you have done so, compare it impar-

tially with the Kurán; and then, I am quite confident, you will perceive the truth of the following lines on 'Arabia visited by the Light of Truth':—

'In thy book are lust and wrath,  
Learn not from it heaven's path—  
It is not the word of truth.  
I come to thee.

'Here I give the sacred page,  
The work of the inspired sage,  
Which is light in every age.  
I come to thee.

'Press no more to Mecca's shrine,  
Seek no righteousness of thine,  
Take the justice that is mine.  
I come to thee.

'Error's gloom shall pass away,  
Superstition lose her way,  
Cease the bloody, cruel fray.  
I come to thee.

'Lay aside the glittering sword,  
Hear the peaceful, cheering Word  
Of Christ, thy rightful, loving Lord.  
I come to thee.

'Tidings blest to thee I bring,  
Tidings blest aloud I sing  
Of the heaven-anointed King,—  
Of His cross and mighty love,  
Which the soul with power can move,  
And to heaven conduct above.  
I come to thee.'\*

"Consider your sins, which form so heavy a burden upon you, that it cannot be removed by your own righteousness. Remember the consequences of your sins cannot be averted by Muhammad, who was himself a sinner like yourselves, and

\* Wilson's *Lands of the Bible*, vol. II. p. 712.

who is distinctly declared to be so, as I have before remarked, too, in several places in the Kurán.

" ' May the day soon arrive when the nations that have so long trusted in him of Mecca, shall recognise in Jesus of Nazareth, the Prophet that they need to guide them to the knowledge of all heavenly truth ;—yea, and more than a prophet—a Priest also, who atones for their sins and ever lives to make intercession for them,—and a King, to defend and rule over them, whose kingdom (unlike that of Muhammad) is not of this world, and who summons them to contests and victories the most truly heroic and glorious—spiritual contests, spiritual victories !' \*

" While the privilege of baptism is being bestowed upon me, may I seek to partake of the blessings it represents. May my sins be forgiven anew. May I be baptized as a son of God, and be partaker of His Holy Spirit. May I always strive to hold intercourse with God by prayer, that my faith in Christ may be confirmed, and that I may grow and increase in the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that ' my heart may be comforted, and that I may be established in every good word and work.' Thus, ' enjoying peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, being accepted in the beloved,' ' I shall rejoice in the glory of God,' believing that in His own due time ' an entrance shall be ministered unto me abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, one God in three persons, be ascribed all honour, glory,—might, majesty, praise, now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen. "

" SAYYAD HASAN MEDINIYAH.

" BOMBAY, 8th Feb. 1857."

\* Mitchell's *Letters to Indian Youth*.



*PERSONAL STATEMENT of Shâpurjî Edaljî.*

"Sin is the breaking of the commandments of God. I feel that I am a sinner, a great sinner in the sight of God. Sin has debased and defiled my soul. It has produced in me 'unruly passions, tormenting anxieties, a terrified conscience, a wounded spirit.' I am a sinner—a wretched and miserable sinner. Nay, my transgressions are innumerable. On account of my sin I deserve everlasting punishment. I have trembled before God; and the questions arose in my mind, 'What must I do to be saved?' 'Will not my sins be forgiven?'

"When I felt much, I began to inquire after my Pârsî religion, asking, If there is any salvation in it? Does it reveal any one by whom I can be saved? I found that by carrying bundles of dry and soft wood to the fire of Hormazd my sins could not be forgiven. I found that by killing reptiles and unclean animals, I could not be saved. I found that by worshipping fire, the sun, the moon, the stars, the sea, my own soul, my faruhar, the Izads, the Amshaspands, the Gehs, the trees, the mountains, the Gathas, the fountains of water, flowing and stationary, the trunks and fruits, the whole earth, the whole heaven, all the animals both aquatic and terrene, the caves, the active and good-minded persons, the health and soundness of my body, the departed souls, the reservoirs of waters, &c., &c., &c., I could not be saved.

"When I failed in this manner in my religion, I continued my inquiries, and found out that Jesus Christ suffered, dying on the cross, for me and every one that goes to the Father by Him. He is our substitute and divine Saviour. In Him, wholly and solely, I place my confidence. There is none other name given among men but it, whereby they can be saved. God declares that He will justify those who receive His beloved Son Jesus, and pardon all their sins and transgressions according to the riches of His grace. For the

righteousness of Christ, God at once forgives all the sins of believers, and views them as righteous in His sight, even as if they had never disobeyed His laws. The reason is this, Christ has satisfied God's justice by bearing our sins in His own body on the tree.

"But do I really believe, and am I truly converted to God? I humbly hope that I am. I think that I have experienced the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Before, I was in a state of spiritual ignorance, but now, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, I know the way of salvation. Before, I was a lover of sin, but now I hate sin and love God. I love Jesus, my strength and Redeemer, with my heart and soul. I wish to be joined to the family of God.

"But I am not satisfied with my present attainments in holiness. I desire to be more and more sanctified by the Word and Spirit of the living God. This impure and miserable heart cannot be sanctified by myself. I incline to be more and more purified by the aid of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord give me His Spirit to pray, praise, and love Him, to strive to walk according to His commandments, and honour His laws as the means of my Christian improvement and growth in grace.

"Allow me now to express the desires of my heart in reference to the instruction and conversion of my fellow-men.

"I recommend you, my Pársí friends, as indeed many have done before, to take the Bible into your hands, and to compare it honestly with the inconsistent book called the Vandidad. If you do this, you will find the one worthy of acceptance, and the latter full of absurdities and follies. I speak this to the Zoroastrians. I wish also to say a few words to my other friends, who neither believe in Pársísm, nor in any other religion but Deism.

"What comfort have you, my friends, in Deism? Will your sins through it be pardoned? Have you any hope from it that you will be justified, adopted, and sanctified? Oh! I was once an unhappy Deist. I was striving with the Holy

Spirit, but now I repent of it. So do you repent and come forward, and boldly but humbly confess the name of Jesus, the only Saviour. You say that you will be saved by your deeds, but I tell you your works are not righteous. Your works cannot save you. O my friends, 'Have you sins or have you none? If you have, whither should you go but to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world? Have you souls or have you none? If you have, whither should you go but to the Saviour of souls? Is there a life to come or is there not? If there is, whither should you go but to Him who only hath the words of eternal life? Is there a wrath to come or is there not? If there is, whither should you go but to Him who only can deliver from the wrath to come? Will He not receive you? If He yields Himself into the hands of them that sought His life, will He hide Himself from the hearts of them that seek His mercy.'\* Then be ye ready to suffer for His glorious name. For the matter of your salvation, be not guilty of procrastination or delay. 'Your continuance in this tabernacle of clay will be short, and it is altogether uncertain. Now, as you must be speedily summoned to the presence of your Maker, and subjected to His unerring scrutiny, and as you may be called from this sublunary scene without any warning, you ought, above all things, to betake yourselves to immediate preparation. By following this course, you will avoid evil and obtain good. It is not too soon for you to be delivered from the curse and power of sin; and it is not too soon for you to obtain the knowledge of God and the Redeemer whom He has appointed, and an interest in His favour. Thousands perish because they resolve to delay. May the Lord in mercy prevent you from being added to their unhappy number.'†

"Now, I come forward to receive baptism in your presence, and to be admitted into the visible Church of Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer. May the love of the Father, Son,

\* From a tract, *Sinner Come*.

† Wilson on the *First Religion*, p. 99.

and Holy Ghost, the one God, rest upon me ! May the atoning blood of Jesus, and the purifying influences of His Spirit, represented by the symbol of water before me, ever be applied to my soul. May my confession of the Saviour be followed, through Divine grace, by a constant adherence to His cause. And may grace, mercy, and peace be upon me, now and for ever. Amen.

“ SHAPURJI EDALJI,

“ BOMBAY, 8th Feb. 1857.”



## WORKS ON THE PARSI RELIGION BY DR. WILSON.

### THE PARSI RELIGION.

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